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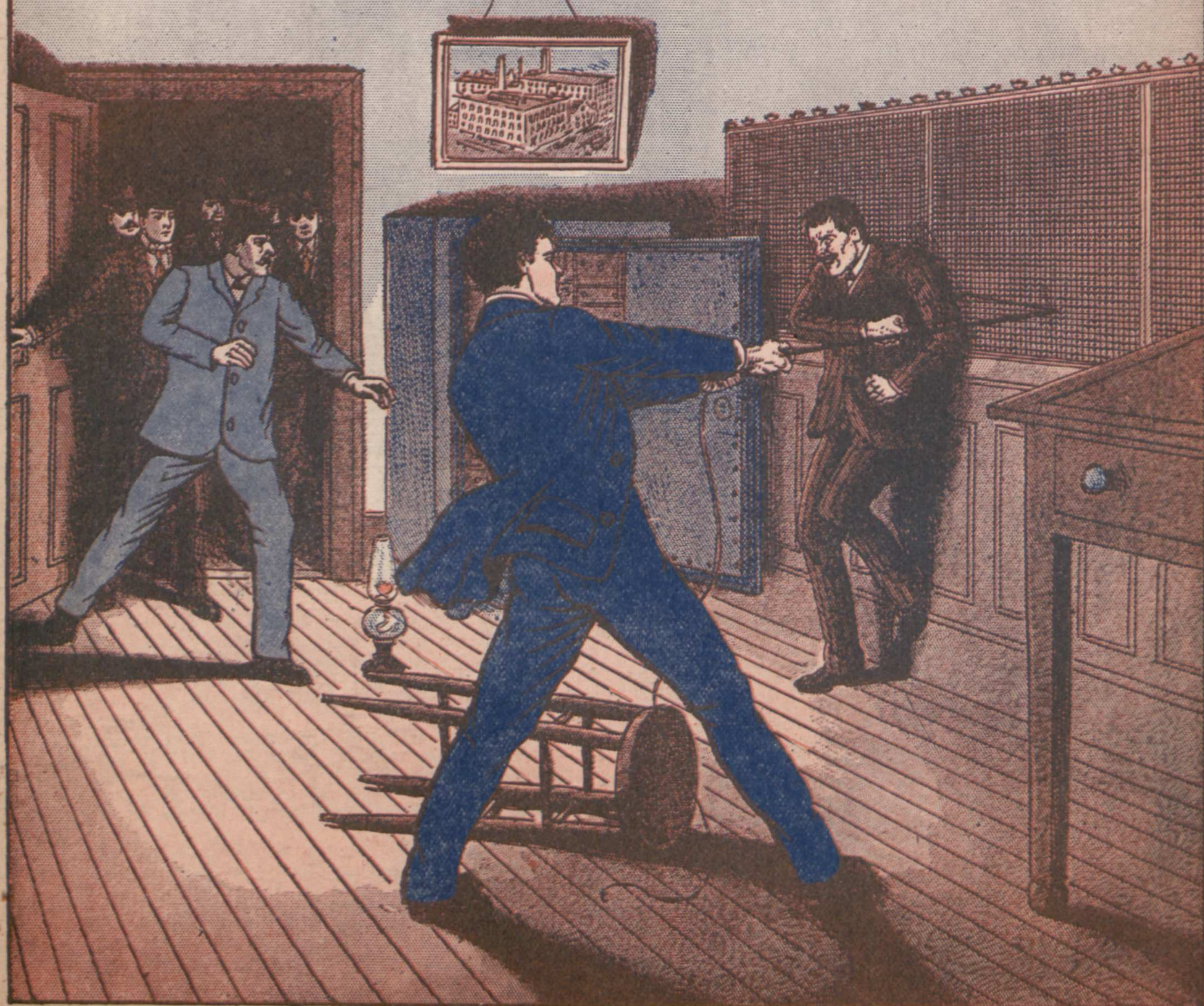
FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

RISING IN THE WORLD; OR, FROM FACTORY BOY TO MANAGER.

AND OTHER STORIES

By A SELF-MADE MAN.



Jack flung the noose over the thief's head, and it fell around his arm. Seizing the other end of the line, he pulled it taut, drawing Dean up to the screen a prisoner. "Help!" yelled the boy, and in rushed the crowd.

OCTOBER 22, 1912

No 325

THE BOYS' OWN

STORIES OF

BOYS THAT MAKE

THEIR WAY IN THE WORLD

OR FROM FACTORY BOY TO MAN

AND OTHER STORIES



Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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RISING IN THE WORLD

— OR —

FROM FACTORY BOY TO MANAGER

By **A SELF-MADE MAN**

CHAPTER I.

HOW JACK CLYDE SAVES BERTHA GARLAND.

Bertha Garland, the prettiest working girl in Northbridge, was walking rapidly down the street toward the cotton mill when the seven o'clock whistle blew shrilly upon the balmy morning air.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed in a tone of great vexation as well as concern, "I shall be shut out. I know I shall. Isn't it too provoking for anything!"

Seeing quite a bunch of girls, the last in sight, entering the nearby gate at that moment, Bertha caught up her skirts and made a dash for the goal, in hopes that by sheer good luck she might be able to get into the yard.

She was just a moment too late.

The gate slid across the opening almost in her face and left her on the wrong side.

"Oh, Mr. Dean!" she cried loudly, pounding on the gate. "Won't you please let me in?"

Morris Dean, a sallow-complexioned young man of nineteen, whose incipient mustache was a standing joke with the girls of the Northbridge Cotton Mill, officiated as time-keeper.

He had made himself very unpopular with the hands by his promptness in shutting the gate the first toot of the whistle.

Furthermore, it was his habit to glance up and down the street at the moment the whistle blew when his time-sheet noted an absentee, and if he saw the delinquent approaching he would hold the gate open until the tardy one was almost up to it, and then suddenly close it in her face with a chuckle of delight.

Then he would peek through a hole at the dismayed one on the outside, and rub his hands in great glee.

This morning he noted the fact that Bertha Garland had not arrived when the whistle blew.

He was a bit surprised at this, for she was usually one of the early birds.

When the bevy of girls who arrived at the last minute had filed into the yard, he looked out and saw Bertha coming hot-foot for the gate.

With a grin he pulled the gate shut and fastened it.

But he did not actually intend to keep the pretty millhand out.

Had it been any other girl he would have been deaf to her entreaties; but it was different with Bertha.

Morris was sweet on Miss Garland, and tried in every way to make himself solid with her.

In the present case he saw a chance to do her a favor, for

it was the rule of the establishment that once the gate was shut it must not be opened again to admit a late comer.

So when Bertha rapped on the gate and made the appeal Morris was looking for, he answered through his peep-hole:

"Is that really you, Miss Bertha?"

"Yes, yes," she cried eagerly. "It's really me. You'll let me in, won't you?"

"It's against the rules, Miss Bertha," he replied, as if hesitating.

"But I was right here when you shut the gate."

"Well, I'll let you in this time," he answered, opening the gate so she could pass through; "but I wouldn't do it for any one else."

"Aren't you good," she cried with a smile as she darted off toward the entrance door of the big brick building.

Morris rubbed his thin hands together with satisfaction as he watched the lovely fifteen-year-old miss skip gracefully across the yard.

"That's the only girl out of the bunch I'd put myself out for, and there isn't anything I wouldn't do for her. She's as sweet as a June rose, and as pretty as a picture. I've been itching to do her a favor, and now I hope she'll be grateful to me. I can't understand what she can see in that common factory boy—Jack Clyde—to be on such familiar terms with him, when she could associate with a gentleman like me. I could give her a swell time if she'd cotton to me, while Jack Clyde—bah! I hate him! All the girls say he's the best-looking chap in Northbridge. He is, I don't think. I'd like to know where I come in when I've got my good duds on. He doesn't make enough to afford a decent suit, the beggar! And what schooling has he had alongside of me? He hasn't even a decent common school education, while I—I've been through the High School. Why, he isn't in my class even a little bit, and yet he has the nerve to make up to the prettiest girl in the mill. He makes me sick."

Morris gathered up his time-sheet and walked into the office, where, as it was too early yet for the other clerks to appear, he spread the morning paper out on the top of his tall desk and began to read the sporting intelligence.

When Bertha Garland stepped into the elevator which would take her to the fourth floor where the loom she worked at stood in the midst of a forest of similar machines, she came face to face with Jack Clyde, who had a wicker basket full of fluffy cotton on his shoulder.

"Good-morning, Jack," she said with a bright smile.

"Good-morning, Bertha," he replied with a cheerful smile.

"You're late. How did you manage to pass Morris Dean? You must have a pull with him."

"I guess not," she replied with a toss of the head, for she

did not like the timekeeper a bit better than any other girl in the mill.

"Maybe you hypnotized him, for I notice he's never so happy as when he can shut out one or more of the girls in the morning," chuckled Jack.

Bertha laughed.

"Perhaps I did, for he actually opened the gate after he had closed it and let me in."

"Did he really?" he asked in some surprise. "It isn't like him to do that."

She nodded with a laughing look in her eyes.

"He said he wouldn't have done it for any one else."

"Then I guess Andy Blossom is right."

"About what?" she asked.

"He told me Morris Dean was dead gone on you."

"The idea!"

"I don't blame him. Aren't you the nicest girl in the mill?"

At that moment the elevator stopped at the fourth floor, and Bertha, flashing a saucy glance at Jack, sprang out and made for the dressing-room.

Jack got out, too, and carried his load to a certain part of the floor.

"You're late in getting to work, Bertha Garland," said one of the foremen sharply as the girl came to her loom. "I'll have to dock you fifteen minutes."

She made no reply, but started her machine.

"Jobkins is cranky this morning," whispered the nearest girl to her.

"He's always cranky with me," replied Bertha, tossing her shapely head, disdainfully. "Some people are never happy unless they're finding fault."

The foreman's sharp ears caught the remark and he looked daggers at the pretty fair-haired girl, whom he disliked on account of her good looks and popularity.

There was another and more potent reason why he was down on her—he had tried to make love to her when she first came to the mill, and she turned him down so hard that he had never forgiven her.

Jobkins, who was twenty-three, also hated Jack Clyde, because of Bertha's evident preference for him.

Whenever an opportunity occurred that he could annoy or find fault with the bright, industrious boy, he took full advantage of it.

He knew Jack depended on his job in the mill to support his widowed aunt and crippled sister, and it gave him a great deal of satisfaction to threaten the boy occasionally with discharge.

As Jack took care not to give him any real excuse to go to such an extreme, he was unable to gratify his spite to the extent he wished.

As Jobkins didn't confine his fault-finding and overbearing conduct to Bertha and Jack, he was not a bit more popular among the hands than was Morris Dean.

In fact, of the two he was the most cordially detested.

The mill had a stack of orders on hand and was working at its full capacity.

Every floor was a busy hive of industry.

The music of the looms was continuous from seven to twelve and from one to six.

Jack and the other boys were kept on a steady hustle, and if any girl showed signs of weariness she soon heard from the foreman in charge of her section.

It was getting close to noon on the morning our story opened.

Jack was taking a drink of water from a cooler which stood on a low shelf at the end of the room where the big belt that furnished power to the main shaft came through an opening in the floor.

Suddenly the shrill scream of a girl rang through the room.

It was a cry that only comes from a human being in deadly peril.

For a second Jack's heart stood still, then, with the instinctive idea that one of the girls had been caught in the machinery, the boy sprang at the handle of the throw-off, which hung within a yard of the cooler, and controlled the power on that floor, and flung it over.

In a moment the main shaft ceased to revolve and every machine on the floor stopped.

A scene of intense excitement ensued.

Section foremen and boys were seen running toward a certain point, and Jack started in the same direction.

A girl was seen suspended by the hair from a counter-shaft, where she hung limp and senseless.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Jack, in horrified surprise, "it's Bertha Garland!"

It was indeed Bertha.

As she was returning to her loom from the dressing-room, a sudden draft of air coming through an open window had blown her long golden hair around one of the belts.

In a moment she was being drawn upward toward the counter-shaft.

She gave that one agonizing shriek and then fainted from the fright and pain.

But for Jack's prompt action in shutting off the power her entire scalp would have been torn off in a few seconds more.

Lucky indeed for her that he was at the cooler at that critical moment.

Ladders were brought, and the girl was seized and supported while the lacing of the belt connecting the counter-shaft with one of the branches of the main shaft was cut.

Then the counter-shaft was reversed until Bertha's hair was released.

She was lowered to the floor and given in charge of several of the women to bring her to consciousness.

The belt was then replaced and the machinery started again.

More than half of the girls were unable to resume work at once.

Several had fainted and were being revived, while the rest were so unnerved by the accident that many had become more or less hysterical, and had to be looked after.

Before the noon whistle sounded, however, it was known all over the floor that it was Jack Clyde who had saved Bertha Garland from a terrible disfigurement, if not death, and perhaps with the single exception of Jobkins there wasn't a person in the room but was ready to take off their hat to the bright boy who had given such a remarkable exhibition of presence of mind.

CHAPTER II.

THE DESERTED SHANTY.

"You're wanted in the girls' dressing-room, Jack," said Andy Blossom, Jack's particular friend, who worked on the same floor with him.

"What for?" asked Jack.

"Bertha Garland has come to and wants to see you."

Jack easily guessed what she wanted to see him for, but though delighted that he had been able to render her so signal a service, he would have preferred to have had her postpone her protestations of gratitude.

But as he had been sent for he couldn't very well evade the interview, so he presented himself before her.

"Jack Clyde," she said, holding out her hand to him, "you saved my life and I shan't forget you as long as I live."

"Don't mention it, Bertha," he replied. "I'm glad I thought of doing the right thing at the right moment."

"You must take me home, Jack, as soon as the whistle blows. I couldn't do another bit of work to-day to save my life."

"I'll see you home with pleasure. How do you feel now?"

"My head is in a terrible shape. I feel as if every hair had been drawn out by the roots."

"I don't wonder. It's a good thing you're a lightweight, or you might have lost your scalp anyway. Why, when I saw you first you were hanging by your hair alone within a couple of inches of the counter-shaft. You had a narrow escape. It isn't so long ago that I read in the newspaper about a girl who had her scalp torn off by just such an accident in a Chicago glove factory."

"Oh!" shuddered Bertha. "Please don't talk about it any more. My nerves are all of a tingle. I shall have horrible dreams for a month. I know I shall."

As soon as the noon hour arrived there was a rush for hats on the part of the hands who went home for dinner, and a stream of employees was soon filing through the gate into the street.

Bertha was feeling a little better by that time, but she was glad to have Jack accompany her to her mother's humble cottage on the outskirts.

"I'll call around after supper and see how you are getting on," said the boy when he was leaving her at the gate of the little garden patch which lay between the street and the house.

"I shall be very glad to see you, Jack," she replied, giving

him her hand. "I hope you understand that I am very, very grateful to you indeed. I shudder to think what might have happened to me had you not been near the throw-off, or had not acted as promptly as you did. Mother won't be able to thank you enough."

"Don't say any more, Bertha," replied Jack. "I'm glad I saved your hair, at any rate—it is too beautiful to be sacrificed. While I would have done the same for any one—in fact, I shut off the power without knowing it was you who was in danger—I would sooner do you a service than any other girl in Northbridge."

"Thank you, Jack," she answered with a vivid blush.

Then the boy pressed her shapely hand and rushed off to his own home, a quarter of a mile away, to get his dinner, and return to the factory before the one o'clock whistle blew.

There were smiles without number for Jack that afternoon from every girl that he chanced to pass near.

Although he hadn't actually done a heroic action, he was, nevertheless, voted a hero by the fair ones, most of whom envied Bertha Garland for having the inside track with the most popular boy in Northbridge.

There was one girl, Flora Watson by name, who hated Bertha for quite a different reason.

She was about the only mill hand who regarded Morris Dean in a favorable light.

Morris had taken a fancy to her at first and bestowed considerable attention on her, which she had accepted with great satisfaction, for she regarded young Dean as much superior in the social scale to Jack Clyde, or any of the common mill boys, as she considered them.

Morris, however, practically dropped her as soon as he got on speaking terms with Bertha Garland, and Miss Watson was not long in ferreting out the cause.

As a consequence she became desperately jealous of Bertha, imagining that the pretty mill hand was really setting her cap, as the saying is, at Morris, when the truth of the matter was Bertha thought more of Jack Clyde's little finger than the whole of Morris Dean's better dressed self.

Flora Watson was undoubtedly a good-looking brunette, but her disposition was not in keeping with her face.

She was selfish, inclined to be haughty—though her circumstances did not justify the airs she put on—spiteful to a degree, and, when her jealousy was aroused, revengeful.

To what extent the latter controlled her this story will show.

Morris Dean was something of a sport.

He was seldom to be found at home of an evening, but any one who wanted to see him after he had finished his supper could nearly always depend on locating him at the Northbridge Billiard and Pool Parlors on Main street.

Here he read the sporting papers, made small bets on baseball and other events with the frequenters of the place, and flashed his money about as if he had plenty of it.

He was naturally fair prey for sharpers, and one of that gentry succeeded in winning his confidence.

This individual's name was Nelson Spavinger.

He was a second-rate sport, dressed rather conspicuously, especially in the way of cheap but expansive jewelry, and insinuated broadly that he was one of the knowing ones.

As soon as he sized Morris up he cottoned to him at once, and young Dean was flattered by the preference he showed for his society.

It was the evening of the day on which the accident had happened to Bertha Garland.

Mr. Spavinger had gone to the Springfield races that day and had carried with him every cent of money that Morris Dean owned in the world, beside a small sum he had borrowed of the proprietor of the billiard parlors, to invest on certain sure tips which the sporty gentleman assured Morris he had acquired.

He had refused to enlighten the young man as to the horses he intended to back lest, as he said, Morris might inadvertently impart the knowledge to a third person.

He had, for reasons he best knew, arranged to meet young Dean at an old deserted shanty on the outskirts of the town instead of at the billiard parlors, and pay over to him his share of the winnings.

Morris ate his supper in a state of suppressed excitement and satisfaction at the enchanting prospect of receiving a considerable sum of cash that evening from his friend Nelson Spavinger.

He had cut from the evening paper a list of most of the winning horses at the Springfield racetrack, and the balance

he had taken from the ticker at the billiard parlor on his way home.

As the cautious Mr. Spavinger had not supplied him with any data, he could not, of course, say for sure that the said winners were the horses on which the sporting gent had laid his money, but he entertained little doubt on that head, since he had every confidence in Mr. Spavinger's honesty and ability to pick a winner.

Therefore he lost no time in making his way after dark to the dilapidated shack where he expected to meet the knowing gentleman.

He carried an umbrella with him, for the sky had a threatening and watery look.

Before he got there it began to rain heavily, which made him fear that Mr. Spavinger might fail to keep the appointment.

About the time Morris left his home, Jack Clyde left his aunt's cottage en route for Bertha Garland's abode.

Jack also noted the unpropitious appearance of the sky, but not possessing an umbrella, or being afraid of a chance wetting, he kept on his way.

Before he got half-way to his destination the rain commenced to fall.

It soon came down so fast that Jack looked around for shelter, and his eyes lighted on the ramshackle story-and-a-half building toward which Morris Dean was bending his steps.

The ancient door was partly ajar, and so Jack pushed his way inside and took his stand beside the window which afforded him a view of the wet and lonesome road.

As the rain let up to a drizzle and he began to think of resuming his walk, he noticed a young man coming along at a smart pace with an umbrella.

To Jack's surprise this person turned in at the broken-down gate and came up to the building.

He did not immediately enter, but stood outside looking up and down the road with some evidence of impatience.

Jack recognized him at once as Morris Dean, and wondered what had brought him to that section of the town, so far from his customary haunts.

Presently another person came walking up the road.

To Jack's astonishment he, too, turned in at the gate and walked up to Morris.

This was Mr. Nelson Spavinger.

"He looks like a sport," thought Jack. "I wonder who he is? He seems to know Morris pretty well."

At that moment the rain resumed its heavy pattering on the roof.

"They're coming in here," breathed Jack. "I'll let them have this room all to themselves, as Morris Dean is no friend of mine, and I am not anxious to make the acquaintance of his companion."

So Jack quietly withdrew to the rear room, taking his seat on an empty candle box he found there, just in time to escape the notice of the newcomers, as they walked into the front apartment.

CHAPTER III.

NELSON SPAVINGER AND HIS DUPE.

"It's a disagreeable night, young gent," remarked Mr. Spavinger, as he led the way into the room. "I wouldn't have come out here only I didn't want to disappoint you. I make it a point always to keep my engagements."

"I don't see why we couldn't have come together in a private room at Bishop's Parlors just as well?" replied Morris. "It would have been much handier, and a good bit more comfortable."

"There are reasons, Master Dean, which I might explain if I cared to, why I preferred to come here. We will throw a light on the subject if you don't mind."

It was soon apparent that Mr. Spavinger was not unfamiliar with the interior of the old shanty, for he went to a closet, took out a box and placed it near the entrance to the room where Jack sat in the gloom, an unsuspected intruder.

Then he produced a whisky bottle with a bit of candle stuck into its neck, and placed it on the box.

Striking a match, he lit the candle, diffusing a dim and uncertain light around that end of the room.

Then he brought forth two smaller boxes, which he placed on either side of the large box.

"Be seated," he said to Morris, pointing at one of the impromptu chairs, and taking possession of the other himself; "we might as well make ourselves comfortable."

He took a cigar from his vest pocket and lit it at the candle

From his hip pocket he next brought out a suspicious looking flat flask.

"You don't imbibe strong liquors, I believe," he said, unscrewing the metal cap and putting the mouth of the bottle to his lips. "It's very handy to have a pocket pistol like this," he grinned, "on a wet night. Takes the chill out of your blood."

"Well, Mr. Spavinger," said Morris, impatiently, not to say anxiously, "what luck to-day? I suppose you collared quite a tidy sum off the bookmakers."

Nelson Spavinger did not hurry himself to answer the question.

He calmly helped himself to as much of the spirits as he wanted and then laid the flask with some deliberation on the box beside the candle holder.

"I'm sorry to say, young gent," replied the turfy individual, "that things didn't pan out just the way I expected to see them do."

"What do you mean?" almost gasped Morris. "Didn't the horse you picked out win?"

"Not on your life, they didn't. A screw worked loose somewhere in my calculations, and all our good money went to swell the bookmaker's profits."

Judging from Nelson Spavinger's voice and manner, he was a good loser.

"Great Scott!" groaned Morris. "Didn't we win a thing?"

"Not a sou marquee."

"Then I'm ruined," answered Dean dismally.

"Ruined!" echoed Mr. Spavinger cheerfully. "Rot!"

"There's no rot about it. I gave you every cent I possessed, including fifteen dollars I borrowed from Mr. Bishop."

"What of it?"

"What of it? Why, I'm busted, can't you see?"

"Well, so am I," replied Mr. Spavinger, as coolly as though such a thing was an everyday occurrence with him. "I'm not kicking. Better luck next time."

"But I won't be able to lay another bet for some time to come."

"Why not? You've got your wages coming, ain't you?"

"What's ten plunks when I've got to pay five of it into the house?"

"What's the matter with owing the five for awhile?" was Mr. Spavinger's cheerful answer.

"It won't do. My father would want to know what I was doing with my money that I couldn't pony up. If he got suspicious it would be all day with me at the Parlors."

"You don't mean it," said Mr. Spavinger somewhat incredulously, blowing a few rings of tobacco smoke into the air.

"I do mean it," replied Morris, with some energy.

"Well, I'm blowed."

"The first thing I've got to do is to stand off Mr. Bishop. I promised to return that money to-night, but now that's impossible. It will take all of a month for me to square myself with him, and I'll hardly have more than cigarette money left. I'm in a deuce of a hole. I've promised to take a girl to the show at the Opera House on Friday night, and now I haven't the price. I'll have to stand her off, too, and I don't know how I'm going to get around it, for she's a regular spitfire when she's mad. I've been trying to shake her for some time, because I'm making up to another one of the factory girls, but she won't be shook."

Mr. Spavinger didn't seem particularly interested in Dean's feminine affairs.

He took another drink and continued to smoke with one eye cocked meditatively at the ceiling.

"You make a lot of fuss over a capful of ill wind," he remarked with a perceptible sneer.

"A capful!" cried Morris, almost angrily, "you mean an overwhelming blast—a hurricane that has completely wrecked me."

"Pooh!" said the sport, emitting a cloud of smoke from his mouth. "Can't you borrow fifty cases from your brother to square yourself?"

"My brother!" cried Morris.

"Sure. Didn't you tell me you had a brother who keeps a store on Main Street?"

"So I did; but he wouldn't give me a red," replied Dean, bitterly.

"He must be a funny kind of brother if he wouldn't," said Mr. Spavinger, looking keenly at his victim.

"He's a sneak," cried Morris, contracting his eyebrows wrathfully. "I hate him!"

"What for?"

"Because he's always talking to the old man about me. It's a wonder he doesn't spy on me at the Parlors, and spoil

me there. If it wasn't he had to be at the store evenings I dare say he would."

"He's as bad as that, is he?"

"Yes, he is," responded Morris, angrily. "Because he's older than me, and is making money, the old man takes stock of everything he says. I believe there's nothing so bad he could say of me that the old man wouldn't believe."

"Well, now," said Nelson Spavinger, chucking the butt of his cigar on the floor and winking at his dupe in a significant way. "I don't know but there may be some advantage in that."

"What do you mean?" asked Morris, in surprise.

"Why, it may save the old gent the shock of a sudden surprise."

"I don't see what you are trying to get at," replied Morris, evidently puzzled.

"You don't?" chuckled the sport, sardonically.

"No, I don't."

"You say your brother couldn't tell the old gent anything so bad of you that he wouldn't believe?"

"That's what I said."

"Well, that ought to be a load off your mind."

"Why ought it?"

"Because, Master Dean, on your own showing, something a bit out of the ordinary will have to be done to get you back on your pins."

"That's a neat way of getting back to business," laughed the young man uneasily.

"Well, you see it's business that won't keep, young gent. Debts of honor—"

"Oh, Bishop will wait, I guess. He knows I'm good for that fifteen cases."

"But how about me?" retorted Mr. Spavinger.

"You!" exclaimed Morris, in astonishment. "I don't owe you anything."

"Oh, you don't?" replied Mr. Spavinger calmly. "What a short memory you've got, Master Dean."

"I tell you I don't owe you a red," shouted Morris. "I don't see how you make it out that I do."

Mr. Spavinger put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a memorandum book.

He turned the leaves over with great deliberation until he came to a certain page.

"Now, young gent, first of all, did you or did you not me to put ten dollars on the first race, me to select the horse?"

"I did, and I gave you the money."

"Key-rect. Well, I picked Tam O'Shanter. He slipped a shoe and came in last, so you lost. Secondly, did you ask me to pick a winner for the second race to the extent of another ten?"

"Yes, and you got the money for that, too."

"Right you are. I thought Jack-o'-Lantern a likely horse to come in first. He was a nose ahead in the home stretch and ought to have won."

"Then why didn't he?"

"Because he slipped a bog and Tallyho beat him by a length. That disposes of two counts. Thirdly, I said I had my eye on a long shot for the third race, and you told me to put up another ten on that race, didn't you?"

"Sure I did, and you—"

"Got the money? Of course I did. I slapped your ten on Bobolink, but, unfortunately, she lost and so you lost again."

"I should think I did."

"Now we come to the fourth race, the most important of all. I thought I had a sure winner for that and you told me to go twenty-five cases on her, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"The man who gave me the tip ran in a cold deck on me. I am sorry to say, I put your money on Minnehaha for first place, and she lost by three lengths, coming in fourth. That was hard luck, for it did you out of seventy-five dollars."

Morris made no reply.

He was thoroughly discouraged by his ill luck.

"Now," went on Nelson Spavinger, after a pause, during which he cast a sidelong glance at his dupe, "comes the fifth race."

"I didn't put up any money on that race," cried Morris, looking at the sport.

"I know you didn't," replied Mr. Spavinger, coolly. "That's just what I was trying to get at. I suggested that you back Jim Dandy."

"And I told you I had no more money to put up," interrupted Morris.

"That's right," replied the sport placidly. "And what did I say?"

"You said you'd lend me a fiver if I wanted you to."

he must work a bit of bunco on top of it. Now, to extricate himself from his hole, Morris is going to try and rob the office safe at the mill. He'll do it, too, I don't think. I'm going to treat Morris Dean to the surprise of his life. I'll give him a shock that he won't forget for a long time to come."

Thus speaking, Jack walked to the front window and looked out.

He saw Mr. Spavinger and Morris Dean vanishing down the road.

"It's too late for me to go on to Bertha Garland's home now. It must be past nine o'clock. She'll think the rain stood me off, so I'll go back home."

On his way home Jack paused before a neat white cottage that bore a sign "For Sale."

"I wonder how long it will be before I have money enough to buy such a little home as that for aunt and sis? I am afraid it will be a good many years yet. It's tough to be poor, and living from hand to mouth, but I don't mean to be poor always. I'm going to leave no stone unturned to get ahead in the world. Every boy has his chance to rise and make himself somebody—why not I? The manager of our mill was a poor boy once, and he worked himself to the front by his own exertions alone. I guess I can do the same. At any rate, it won't be my fault if I don't succeed. Some day I'll own a cottage as good as this—perhaps better."

Jack continued on his way, and in ten minutes reached the plain dwelling his aunt rented for a few dollars a month.

Plain as it looked without, and humble its furnishings within, it was the home of peace and content—happier than many a more pretentious one in the town.

"I did not expect you back so soon, Jack," smiled his aunt, Mrs. Susan Frost. "How is Bertha to-night?"

"I couldn't say, Aunt Sue. I didn't go to her house after all. The rain held me up so long in that shanty down the road that I decided it was too late to call and so I came back."

"That was too bad, and she was expecting you, too."

"Yes, I guess she was; but it can't be helped. That's one of the disadvantages of not owning an umbrella. Good-night, auntie, I'm going to bed."

Next morning Jack met his friend Andy Blossom on the corner as usual.

"Hello, Jack!" said Andy. "What do you know this morning?"

"I know something that'll make you stare all right," replied Jack.

"Is that so?" asked Andy, with some interest. "What is it?"

"I'm going to tell you; but I want you to keep it to yourself."

"I'll be mum if you say so," agreed Andy, on the tiptoe of curiosity.

"It concerns Morris Dean."

"Does it? I'll bet it's nothing to his credit," replied Andy, who, in common with the other mill hands, had a very poor opinion of the timekeeper. "What's he been up to?"

"I found out several things about him last night that rather opened my eyes. I never took much stock in him anyway, in spite of the fact that he's enjoyed advantages that the rest of us haven't had; but I'm bound to say I did not suspect him to be the reckless young rascal he is."

"What did you find out about him?" asked Andy, eagerly.

"I'll tell you the whole story and you can judge for yourself what kind of a chap he really is."

Jack then related to Andy his adventure of the preceding evening in the old shanty on Northbridge road.

"And he really means to rob the office safe to-night?" cried Andy, in astonishment.

"That seems to be his programme."

"What are you going to do? Tell the manager?"

"I suppose that is what I ought to do; but I've another plan."

"What is it?"

"I propose to catch him in the act myself."

"How are you going to manage it?"

"Well, you must help me."

"I'll do it; bet your boots. It would just suit me to have a hand in showing that chap up. He's been treating the girls meaner than dirt since he's been timekeeper. I've got it in for him especially for the shabby way he's acted toward Martha Higgins. He's shut her out six times in the last three months, and I've been looking for a chance to pay him up for it."

Martha Higgins was a sweet little orphan that Andy was paying a good deal of attention to, and it was quite natural for him to resent any indignity offered her.

"We'll take, say, four of the men—I'm going to pick them out

and we'll come to the mill to-night, put the watchman wise to the matter, and lay for him and Mr. Spavinger, his sporting friend, who is going to act as his accomplice. I guess it will be a big surprise to them to find themselves caught in the act."

"I bet it will," grinned Andy.

"I've concluded this will be the best way to deal with them. If I was to tell the manager this morning he might question Morris in his office about the matter. Dean would naturally deny the truth of my story, and his word would be as good as mine; in fact, better, for he would no doubt call in Mr. Spavinger to back him up. I haven't any witness to corroborate my statement, as I was alone in the shanty. So you can see he'd have the best of me. Of course, after that Morris wouldn't think of carrying out his plan against the office safe, and as there would then be no proof of his alleged rascality, the chances are a good many people would think I reported the matter solely to get him into a scrape."

"That's right. The manager is a friend of his father's, and gave him the job in the office. He would hate to see Morris get into trouble. Now if we catch the chap red-handed it will be different. It will open the manager's eyes to Dean's real character, and he will be obliged to take such action as the case demands."

That ended the discussion for the present, as the two boys had arrived at the mill gate.

They passed Morris Dean without giving him a look, and the timekeeper checked them off on his sheet.

Bertha Garland did not appear that day and another girl was put on her loom.

The management, however, did not dock her, as the circumstances excused her absence.

When noontime came, Jack called aside four men in whom he had every confidence, told them what Morris Dean proposed to do in the office that night, and they pledged themselves to join in with Jack and Andy in his scheme to catch the unpopular timekeeper with the goods on.

CHAPTER V.

CAUGHT WITH THE GOODS ON.

About nine o'clock that night Jack and Andy met the four mill hands at a certain corner not far from the mill, and the entire party started for the building.

Arrived at their destination, Andy was boosted over the fence and sent to find the watchman, and give him an inkling of the situation.

He came to the gate and let the party inside.

"Now, Jones," said Jack, who was the self-constituted leader in the proceedings, "you'd better be near the gate around eleven o'clock. In fact, it would be a good idea if you opened the gate and stood there, smoking. You may expect to see this sporting gent, Mr. Spavinger, come down the street. If he carries out the programme agreed upon last night, he'll stop and engage you in conversation. You must get him inside the gate so he can't escape when we're ready to secure him. That's your part of this job, and I expect you to carry it out in good shape. Don't give him any reason to suspect you are on to the scheme."

"All right, Clyde, you can depend on me. Whether I get him inside the fence or not, he won't dare to run when I pull my six-shooter on him," replied the watchman.

Seeing that the watchman understood what was expected of him, Jack led his assistants into the ground floor of the mill and posted them in the entry between the office and the mill proper.

Then he proceeded to make sundry preparations he had figured on for catching Morris Dean at the right moment and showing him for what he was—a night thief.

His plan was quite original in its way, and was really not necessary under the circumstances, but it pleased Jack to trap his man after his own ideas.

He took a long, thin line and made a running noose at one end.

Leaving the noose lying on the floor of the office near the safe, he passed the other end through one of the square holes in the brass top of the office partition, and then a yard from that point he passed it back through another similar hole, leaving the end of the line dangling on the inside of the partition.

"That isn't a bad thief-catching trap," he said, with a grin, surveying the arrangements with a critical eye. "The next thing will be to see if it works to suit my taste."

He blew out the lamp and placed it on a nearby desk, then he went to the window overlooking the street to watch for the coming of Morris Dean.

The office clock struck eleven before there was a sign of a human being on the street, then around the corner came two shadows that presently resolved themselves into Morris and his associate, Nelson Spavinger.

They paused within a few feet of the window where Jack was looking out, and held a final consultation, then the sport continued on down the street and Morris watched him for a minute or two.

He saw the watchman step outside and stand in front of Mr. Spavinger, and that was his signal to get busy.

Jack, in the meantime, had taken up his post under the nearest desk to the safe, whence he could keep a sharp eye on the faithless clerk's movements when he got down to business, and yet would be screened from observation by a couple of tall stools which he had arranged for that purpose.

Presently a key rattled in the lock of the street door, which opened and then shut behind Morris Dean.

He walked quickly toward the end of the office where the safe stood, spied the lamp and lit it.

Going to the cashier's tall desk, the very one under which Jack was hiding, he tried a certain drawer, and found it locked, as he expected it would be.

He was prepared for such an emergency.

Taking a piece of steel from his pocket, he inserted it into the crevice of the drawer, close to the lock, and exerted force enough to snap the lock off.

He then opened the drawer, looked inside and took out a key and a slip of paper.

He examined the paper in the light of the lamp.

Apparently satisfied he had obtained what he wanted, he placed the lamp on the floor near the safe so its light would shine right on the combination, and then, with the contents of the paper for a guide, he set to work to open the safe.

Jack watched him closely as he worked, and at length saw Morris grasp the round steel knob and swing open the safe door.

Then Dean stopped and listened attentively.

Feeling reassured, he applied the key he had taken from the cashier's drawer to the keyhole of the inner steel compartment, where the money he was after lay.

It was but the work of a moment for him to open this door.

Then he grabbed one of the packages of bills, examined the denominations and thrust it into an inside pocket of his jacket.

He was about to close and lock the steel inner door, having secured as much money as he wanted, when the watcher under the desk took a hand in the proceedings.

Creeping softly as a shadow from his riding-place, the boy tiptoed over to the spot where the noose lay within a foot or two of the kneeling clerk.

Jack flung the noose over the thief's head, and it fell around his arms.

Seizing the other end of the line, he pulled it taut, drawing Dean up to the screen a prisoner.

"Help!" yelled the boy, and in rushed the crowd.

Andy Blossom led the four mill hands forward.

"Morris Dean!" they exclaimed in one voice, in apparent surprise, while the captured clerk, struggling in vain to escape from the noose which held him in a vise-like grip, looked at them with a scared, white face.

"Here, Andy," said Jack, "just hold this line and don't let it give a single inch; I'm going to telephone to Manager Burnside. Three of you," to the men, "go out to the gate and secure Mr. Spavinger. Then bring him in here."

Jack rang up Mr. Burnside's home and connected with the manager, who had gone to bed.

"Come over to the office, sir," said the boy. "A thief has broken into your office safe and we have nabbed him."

"I'll come right over," replied the manager. "In the meantime telephone for a couple of policemen."

"That's what I am going to do, sir. Good-by."

Then Jack rang up the police station, and told the person in charge to send two officers to the mill to take charge of a detected thief and his accomplice.

Hardly had he hung up the receiver before there was a noise in the entry and presently Mr. Spavinger was led into the office by the mill hands and the watchman.

He protested loudly against such treatment, but nobody paid any attention to him.

When his eyes rested on Morris Dean pinned up against the wire partition, his face livid with consternation at the predicament he was in, the sport's heart failed him.

He saw that a screw had worked loose in the clerk's little scheme, and realized that the young man was in a serious scrape.

Still he did not see how he could be connected with the affair unless Morris had betrayed him.

It struck him right away that the clerk must have implicated him, otherwise why should these men have jumped on and secured him.

He didn't relish the outlook at all, but determined to swear himself out of it.

Believing Morris Dean had acted the part of a cur, he had no sympathy for the youth he had driven to execute the crime at which he had been caught.

As soon as Mr. Spavinger saw that Jack Clyde was running things, he appealed to him.

"Why am I treated in this high-handed manner, young man?" he demanded, with an appearance of virtuous indignation. "Somebody will have to pay for this outrage."

"You have been taken charge of because you are this chap's accomplice in his attempt to rob the office safe of this mill," replied Jack.

"Are you out of your senses, young man?" exclaimed Mr. Spavinger. "Who has said I am his accomplice?"

"I say so," answered the boy, coolly.

"You!" cried the sport, sarcastically. "You do not seem to know who I am."

"Oh, yes, I do. Your name is Spavinger."

This reply rather staggered the turfy gentleman.

"Do you mean to say that young rascal you have caught has connected me with his crime?" roared Mr. Spavinger, wrathfully.

"No; he hasn't uttered a word since he was pulled up against that partition."

"Then I don't see on what ground——"

"I wouldn't waste any more useless words on the subject, Mr. Spavinger," replied Jack. "You will have the opportunity to prove your innocence, if you can, to-morrow before the magistrate."

"Do you mean to say I have to go to jail to-night?"

"It looks that way."

"I shall sue the mill company for this outrage."

"Maybe you will; but I have my doubts."

At that juncture Mr. Burnside, the manager, came in at the door.

His brow clouded when he saw the open safe door.

"Well, Clyde," he began, "how——"

Then his eye rested on the prisoner pinned to the partition. "Morris Dean!" he exclaimed in utter amazement. "Why, what does this mean?"

"It means, sir," replied Jack, "that we caught Dean in the act of taking money from the safe."

"Impossible!" gasped Mr. Burnside.

"It is the fact, sir. He has a package of money on his person at this moment, which I saw him take from the inner compartment of the safe. Before he could get any more I flung a noose about him and yanked him up against the partition."

"Morris Dean," said the manager, walking up to him, "have you taken money from that safe to-night?"

The unfortunate young man made no reply to this question, but his face proclaimed his guilt, and Mr. Burnside could only draw one conclusion—that the son of Matthew Dean, one of the most respected of Northbridge's retired merchants, was indeed a detected thief.

CHAPTER VI.

MORRIS DEAN AND MR. SPAVINGER ARE BOTH HELD FOR TRIAL.

"Let him loose," said Mr. Burnside, with a sorrowful expression on his countenance, and Andy Blossom dropped the end of the line.

The manager relieved Morris of the noose, put his hand into his inside pocket and drew out the package of bills.

"I am truly pained to find the son of Matthew Dean in such a compromising situation," he said, regretfully. "Have you any explanation to offer for your conduct?"

"I needed the money," replied Morris, doggedly. "I needed it more than I ever wanted anything in my life before. That's all there is to it."

"Why should you commit a crime to get it when you might have asked your father for what you required?"

"I am sorry now that I didn't, though it wouldn't have done me any good," replied the dejected clerk.

"I am afraid you have got yourself into a very serious

scrape, Morris. How you will be able to get out of it I cannot even guess at this moment."

Then, turning to Jack, he said:

"Who is this other person? Is he implicated in this affair, too?"

"Yes, sir. He's Dean's accomplice."

"That's a lie!" exclaimed Mr. Spavinger, hotly. "I had nothing to do with him whatever. I was talking to the watchman of this mill at the yard-gate when I was set upon in a most outrageous manner by those three men and dragged in here. I demand that I be released, sir."

"Do you know this man, Morris?" asked the manager.

"I do," replied the clerk.

"What is his name?"

"Nelson Spavinger."

"Is he connected with you in this affair?"

Morris made no answer.

Mr. Burnside repeated the question with some sharpness.

"Yes, sir; he's the whole cause of my being in this scrape," blurted out the young man.

"You lying young villain!" roared the turfy gentleman, starting forward with the evident intention of striking the clerk in the face.

Jack, who was standing near, interfered and grasped his upraised arm.

At that moment the two police officers appeared at the door, and Mr. Spavinger considered it the part of prudence to subside.

Mr. Burnside reluctantly ordered one of the officers to take charge of Morris, and then pointed out Mr. Spavinger to the other.

"I give them both in charge," he said. "Take them to the station-house. I will follow presently and make the charge against them."

The policeman slipped handcuffs on their prisoners and led them away.

Mr. Burnside returned the money to the safe, relocked it and put the key in the inner compartment in his pocket.

"I am at a loss to understand how you and the other mill-hands happened to be on hand here at the very moment you were needed to save the company's property," he said, turning to Jack.

"I will give you the whole story on the way to the station-house, sir," replied the boy.

"Very well. I shall be glad to hear it."

The four mill men were dismissed, with the manager's thanks for their services, the office was locked up, and then Mr. Burnside, accompanied by Jack and Andy, started for the station-house.

On the way Jack told the manager about his adventure of the previous night at the old shanty.

"Why did you not inform me this morning about this matter so I could have taken measures to prevent this lamentable affair? By taking this thing into your own hands you have ruined Morris Dean's life career. He will certainly be sent to prison, as the evidence against him is as clear as daylight."

"I acted as I thought best in the matter, sir. Had you taxed Dean with the contemplated crime he would most certainly have denied it. My unsupported word would have gone for nothing. In fact, I think I would have been shown up in a bad light myself. The only way that I could see to prove my statement was to lay for him and catch him in the act. This I have done. It is Dean's own funeral—not mine—that he chose to engage in such a criminal enterprise."

"I don't see that he's entitled to sympathy, anyway," spoke up Andy. "He's set every employee in the mill against him since he's been timekeeper by his mean tactics at the gate."

"I don't understand you," said the manager.

Then Andy proceeded to enlighten him concerning Dean's questionable methods with the girls when they reached the gate a moment later.

"Why wasn't this reported to me?" asked the manager.

"Because there isn't a talebearer in the mill—that's why, sir," replied Andy, promptly.

The charge was duly made by the manager against Morris Dean and Nelson Spavinger, and the pair were locked up in separate cells for the night.

There was a reporter at the station-house at the time and he wanted to know the full particulars of the attempted robbery at the mill.

Andy told him all he knew about the matter, and the rest of the facts he afterward got from Jack.

The Northbridge Daily Times had the whole story in a prominent part of the first page in the morning, and the whole

town was talking about it next morning over their breakfast tables.

It would have been a terrible shock for Matthew Dean if he had learned about the disgrace of his youngest son from the newspaper as his acquaintance did.

Mr. Burnside, appreciating this, made it his business to go directly to the Dean home from the station-house and break the news as gently as he could to the young man's father.

Of course every one in the mill knew in the morning that Morris Dean was in the station-house for attempting to rob the office safe the night before, and everybody knew that Jack Clyde was the cause of his incarceration.

While the girls were more or less shocked by the intelligence, Flora Watson was the only one really upset by the fate which had overtaken Morris Dean.

The police court was crowded that morning, as the Dean family was well known in Northbridge, and they had a large circle of acquaintance.

After two or three minor cases had been disposed of, Dean and Spavinger were brought into court, looking considerably the worse for their night's lodging in a common cell.

The prisoners both pleaded not guilty, Morris doing so on the advice of the lawyer provided to look after his interests by his father.

Jack Clyde was, of course, the star witness at the examination, and he gave his testimony in a clear and concise way.

Andy Blossom, the night watchman, and the four mill hands gave their evidence in turn.

The case against Morris was clear beyond a doubt, and he was held for trial at the next term of the circuit court.

Mr. Spavinger's connection with the attempted robbery would hardly have been established had not Morris testified directly against him.

The sport endeavored to make his dupe out a liar, but did not succeed, and, as a consequence, he was also held as Dean's accomplice.

Both were admitted to bail, Mr. Spavinger's being placed as low as \$1,000, but as no one came forward to go his security he had to go back to his cell, while Morris went free on a bond signed by his father and another gentleman.

A few days later the Board of Directors of the Northbridge Cotton Mill held a special meeting, at which Jack Clyde was voted the thanks of the company and the sum of \$1,000 for his services in preventing the robbery of the safe, and bringing the criminal to justice.

The fact that Morris swore at his examination that he only intended to take the single package of bills found on his person had very little weight with the mill company—as a matter of fact, not one of the directors believed his statement, although it was really the truth.

After the meeting the manager called Jack into his office and, after informing him of the action taken by the company, presented him with the \$1,000 check.

The boy thanked him for it, but it was clear to him that Mr. Burnside was sore because the mill boy had taken the affair out of his hands, thereby preventing him from saving young Dean from the consequences of his rashness.

That fact, however, did not greatly worry Jack.

He had the approval of his own conscience and the general approbation of his associates in the mill.

But, though he was not aware of the fact, he had made a serious enemy of Flora Watson, who hated him for the trouble he had brought on Morris Dean.

In her heart she determined to get square with him, and she included Bertha Garland in the same project of revenge.

CHAPTER VII.

MAKING MONEY.

Jack Clyde was the happiest boy in the mill when he left the manager's office with the company's check for \$1,000 in his pocket.

The very first thing he did was to show it to Bertha Garland, who had returned to her loom that day.

She congratulated him upon his good fortune, and at the first chance she whispered the news to the girl at the next loom.

Inside of an hour the fact that Jack Clyde had got a \$1,000 check from the company for catching Morris Dean in the act of robbing the office safe was known from one end of the floor to the other.

It also became known that Andy Blossom and the four mill hands who had helped Jack turn the trick had each been presented with \$20.

There was joy in the little cottage on the Northbridge road

that night when our young hero displayed the check before the wondering eyes of Aunt Sue and his cripple sister Gertie.

"What are you going to do with it, Jack?" asked Gertie, with sparkling eyes. "Put it in the bank?"

"The bank is a good place to keep one's superfluous money," nodded her brother, "but I think maybe I can do better with it."

"How, brother dear?"

"I might buy that cottage down the road that's for sale, and save auntie paying rent. The price, I have been told, is \$1,200. Auntie would have to buy it in her name and give a mortgage for \$200. It would be fine to own our own home, and that's a dandy little house and grounds. I've had my eye on it ever since the sign went up. I wish you and auntie would look it over to-morrow and see how you like it."

"Of course we'll do so if you wish us to, Jack," replied his sister.

Mrs. Frost, on being consulted, was quite pleased with the idea of taking the house, if it proved to be as satisfactory as it looked.

"I think it's a bargain, auntie," said Jack. "You couldn't buy the ground and build a house anywhere near as good for \$1,200."

"It's a wonder it hasn't been snapped up by somebody, then. Good things don't go begging long, as a rule."

"Sometimes they do. I'll tell you an instance. There was a fine place on Prescott Street that was in the market a whole year at \$3,000. Several builders said it was dirt cheap at that figure, and yet nobody seemed to want it. One day a man came along, looked the place over and bought it. The contract had scarcely been signed before one of the very people who had said it was dirt cheap at \$3,000 made an offer to take it off his hands at \$500 advance. He finally sold his option to this man for \$1,000. Inside of two months the second buyer sold the house to another man right in this town for \$5,000. It was worth it, too. Yet, the third buyer could have saved that \$2,000 any time within the year. That's the way with some people. They won't take a thing at any price till somebody else steps in and grabs it, then they suddenly discover they want it badly, and are willing to raise the ante themselves."

Jack, however, much to his aunt's surprise, suddenly decided not to buy the cottage—at least not right away.

The fact of the matter was he had unexpectedly discovered a chance to make a stake by shrewd dealing.

He had heard that a hardware store on one of the most prominent corners of Main Street would soon be for rent.

The man who had run it for years had lately died, and the widow was going to sell the stock-in-trade and fixtures at auction, and dispose of the lease, which had three years yet to run.

This fact would have had no interest for Jack but that he knew an agent of the National Tobacco Trust was in town looking for an eligible site to open a retail store, and he judged the corner in question would suit him to a T.

So Jack made a break at once for the widow who held the lease, and asked her what she would take for it.

She told him \$600.

"I'll give you \$25 for the refusal of it for two days at that figure," said Jack, promptly.

The lady objected to such a small amount, but finally they compromised on \$50 for a seven days' option.

The boy handed her the money, and she signed the option.

He rushed off at once to the hotel where the tobacco trust's agent was stopping, and found that the man was just going to a show at the opera house that evening.

Jack lost no time in making him an offer of the lease of the hardware store.

"Who do you represent?" asked the agent, growing interested at once, for the corner was just what he wanted. "I was not aware that location was for rent."

"I represent myself," replied Jack, with some dignity. "I control the lease of the store for the next three years. The rent is \$60 a month as it stands. I will sell you the lease for twelve hundred dollars cash, or I will sub-let the store to you for one year at one hundred dollars a month, with privilege of renewal at the same rent for the rest of the term covered by the lease."

"When will the store be vacant?"

"You can have possession on the first of the month."

"I'll give you one thousand dollars for the lease," said the agent.

Jack shook his head.

"I can do better than that with a man who wants to establish a drugstore on that corner."

"I'll go down there with you and look the store over."

"All right," replied Jack.

The agent was pleased with the store and decided to head off the druggist by agreeing to the boy's terms.

Jack gave him a written agreement to turn the lease over to him on the following evening, and the agent paid him one hundred dollars on account.

The man then went on to the opera house, while Jack paid a visit to the widow.

He paid her the six hundred dollars, and she transferred the lease of the corner store to him.

Next evening he met the agent at the hotel and completed the deal, pocketing a profit of six hundred dollars by the transaction.

He was now prepared to buy the cottage and pay all the cash for it, which would leave him four hundred dollars to put in the bank.

It happened, however, that next morning he noticed an advertisement in the morning's paper of a much better house, with more ground, that was offered at a bargain to close out an estate.

The following day being Sunday, he and his aunt went around and looked at it.

It was a very desirable place and dirt cheap at \$2,500.

"We'd better take it, auntie," he said.

"It's too big for us, Jack," she objected. "Besides you've only got sixteen hundred dollars, and would be obliged to put a mortgage on it. That would cost us fifty dollars a year in interest. Now, the cottage on Northbridge road you could get free and clear and still have several hundred to draw interest in the savings bank. This is a very fine place, and I have no doubt it is cheap, but it is foolish for you to buy it, I think."

"Auntie, I see a speculation in this," said Jack. "I'll bet I could resell this property at a profit before you even took title to it. This house is a snap at twenty-five hundred dollars. It's worth four thousand dollars if it's worth a dollar. I don't believe in losing such a chance. Here's a gentleman and lady coming to look at it now. We'll run around to the lawyer's house and tell him we'll take the property. You can pay him one hundred dollars down. He'll give you a receipt dated yesterday to make it legal. You can then sign the contract any day next week you like and pay him four hundred more. It will take thirty days, I guess, to have the title passed upon, and during that interval we may have an offer to take the contract off our hands. If not, you can buy the property as soon as the title is shown to be all right, and then I'll advertise the place for sale at whatever price I think it ought to bring."

Whatever Jack said always went with his aunt, for she had the utmost confidence in his business sagacity, boy though he was, so they went around to call on the lawyer who had charge of the property.

The lawyer accepted the \$100, gave his receipt therefor, and promised to have the contract ready in a few days for Mrs. Frost to sign at his office.

That evening a gentleman called at the Frost cottage.

Jack recognized him as the escort of the lady they had seen looking at the house just as they left the lawyer's.

He had called, he said, to see if Mrs. Frost would take five hundred dollars for her option on the property.

"No, sir," replied Jack, speaking up; "we have a bargain in that property. It is easily worth four thousand dollars, just as it stands."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the visitor, with a frown.

"Very well, sir. Then we won't argue the matter. I wouldn't advise my aunt to take a cent less than twelve hundred dollars for her option."

"Then we can't do business," said the gentleman, rising and taking his leave.

On the evening of the day Mrs. Frost signed the contract the gentleman called again, and, after some dickering, offered \$1,000 for the option.

"We'll let you have an answer in a day or two," replied Jack.

"I think you ought to have accepted his offer, Jack," said Aunt Sue, after their visitor had departed. "He might change his mind."

"I'll risk it," grinned Jack.

Next day Mrs. Frost got a letter from the lawyer, saying that he could get her \$1,500 for her option if she cared to accept it.

"Take it," said Jack, when she showed him the letter that night.

Two days later Mrs. Frost received a check from the purchaser, not the gentleman who had dickered with them, for

\$2,000, which included the \$500 she had paid on the contract, and Jack found himself worth \$3,100—\$2,500 of which he had made in less than a month through a shrewd use of the \$1,000 he had received from the mill company.

"I guess you'd better buy the cottage up the road now, auntie," he said that evening.

"Are you sure that you won't change your mind to-morrow?" she asked, with a smile.

"I guess not. I have no more irons in the fire at present."

"Well, after buying the cottage you'll still have nineteen hundred dollars to your credit in the bank."

"Yes. That ought to be enough to see me through my next scheme," he replied, putting on his hat, for he had promised Bertha he would call on her that evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRIKE.

It soon began to be whispered about among the girls on the fourth floor of the mill that Flora Watson had become very thick with David Jobkins, the foreman of her section.

Every one knew that Jobkins had been making up to her for some time, but without any more success than he had had with Bertha Garland, for Flora had always shown a decided preference for Morris Dean.

Now, since Morris had got into such serious trouble, Flora changed about and began to favor the foreman.

At least, it seemed that way to the other girls.

As a matter of fact, however, Flora had a purpose in view, and she expected to accomplish it through Jobkins, whom she really did not care even a little bit for.

Jobkins readily fell into the trap.

He was quite infatuated with Flora, and was willing to do most anything to make himself solid with her.

He had not the faintest idea that the girl was meeting Morris on the sly two or three evenings a week.

Nor that these two were plotting to involve Jack Clyde in a peck of trouble through his connivance.

Flora now permitted Jobkins to escort her home from work most every night.

On one of these occasions she grew quite confidential with him.

"Do you know," she said, "I can't bear that Jack Clyde. I can't understand what the girls see in him to rave about him as they do. They actually say he's the best looking boy in town," tossing her head disdainfully.

"They're away off their perch," replied Jobkins. "For my part, I hate the chap. I wish I could find some excuse for givin' him the bounce."

"I wish you could, too. I'm tired of seeing him around the mill," she said.

"He doesn't give me a chance. He's too plaguey correct in everythin' he does. And now, to make the matter more difficult, he's made himself solid with the company by showin' up that lobster, Morris Dean."

If Jobkins had seen the look Flora flashed upon him when he referred sneeringly to Morris, he wouldn't have felt quite so sure of the girl's feelings toward him.

"Isn't there any way we could get him out of the mill?" she asked.

"Not that I know of," he answered.

"I've heard there is likely to be trouble at the mill over the new rules that go into effect next week," she said, after a pause.

"I reckon there will be," nodded Jobkins, significantly.

"The men are holding meetings on the subject, I think, and are trying to get the girls over on their side."

"That's right," admitted the foreman.

"Do you think there's any possibility of a strike?"

"Yes; I think there is if the management doesn't haul in its horns."

"I heard Bertha Garland say to-day that she's opposed to having trouble with the company."

"She is, eh?" replied Jobkins. "Do you think she'd turn scab if we all went out?"

"I think she's just that kind of a creature," replied Flora, spitefully. "And she isn't the only one, either, that would do it."

"Who are the others?"

Flora mentioned a score of names.

"Confound the women!" snarled Jobkins. "They are always for takin' the bread out of a man's mouth."

"It isn't the girls alone we'll have to fight against. From what Bertha said, Jack Clyde, Andy Blossom, and a dozen at least of the men are sure to stand by the company."

"They will, will they?" hissed Jobkins. "Let them dare do it and we'll fix them. If there's trouble over the rules, those who won't stand by the rest of us had better look out, that's all," said Jobkins, threateningly.

"That is right," replied Flora. "If Jack Clyde stands out with the others, it will give you an excuse to fix him so he won't ever get back to the mill."

"You can gamble on it that we'll fix him," growled Jobkins. "And we'll fix him for keeps, too."

"I hope you will, David," she said, vindictively, "for I hate him."

This was the first time she had ever addressed the foreman by his Christian name, and he was tickled to death.

It was quite true that there was trouble brewing in the Northbridge Cotton Mill over the new and rather stringent rules about to be introduced by the manager.

A committee had waited on Mr. Burnside and objected to them, but the reply he made to the spokesman was by no means reassuring.

About two-thirds of the hands were dead against the new arrangement, while the other third, chiefly men with large families and girls, who were the main support of their parents and brothers and sisters, objected to taking any action that would interfere with their employment.

Jack and Andy, after studying out the new regulations carefully, decided to stand by the company if there was trouble.

On Friday night the kicking hands held a meeting to arrive at a final decision as to what they were going to do.

After a stormy discussion, it was voted to send the manager an ultimatum in the morning, giving him to understand that if the new rules were to be enforced they would quit work.

As the company had more orders on hand than they could fill with the whole force, the kickers thought they had the company where the hair was short.

But they made a mistake.

Manager Burnside handled the Ultimatum Committee without gloves.

He told them that every employee who failed to report on Monday morning without a valid excuse must consider themselves discharged, and that their places would immediately be filled with outsiders.

This stand, taken by the manager, angered the kickers, and another meeting was called for that night.

At this meeting inflammatory speeches were made, and the motion to stay away in a body on Monday morning was carried unanimously amid great enthusiasm.

Somebody carried the news to Mr. Burnside that evening, and, as he had been expecting some such action on the part of the kickers, he was fully prepared to deal with the situation.

At half-past six Monday morning Jack Clyde and Andy Blossom left their homes as usual to go to the mill.

When they reached the corner of the block in which the mill was located, they were stopped by two of the seceded hands, who had been told off as pickets, and who asked him to stand by the kickers and not go to the mill.

The boys refused to join the strikers, and as they moved on were called "scabs" by their associates.

"We don't care what you call us," retorted Jack. "It isn't a question of wages or any union principle that's involved in this matter. The company has the right to make new rules if it chooses, and so long as they're within reason I can't see why you fellows go to such an extreme as striking. You're making a mistake."

His words were received with hoots, so he and Andy went on and reported at the gate.

A number of the girls had already arrived, among them Bertha Garland.

Altogether about two-fifths of the hands were registered on the time-sheet when the whistle blew.

The manager was in his office, and as soon as he had examined the record of the arrivals he sent a telegram to Boston for a certain number of hands, and these were sent to Northbridge by the next train.

Mr. Burnside and several policemen met them on their arrival and escorted them to the factory, where they were immediately put to work in the places of the malcontents.

Apparently, the company had won the struggle at the start-off, hands down.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT BERTHA HEARD IN THE SHANTY.

Nearly all of the kickers assembled in the neighborhood of the mill that morning and held a number of impromptu meet-

ing, at which the situation was canvassed and a few speeches were made.

Most of the girls who had been induced to join the ranks of the malcontents were discouraged by the outlook, and a large proportion of them applied at noon for their old jobs, but were told that the company had all the help it wanted at present.

During the day the manager secured lodgings for the new hands, and the prospects of the strikers looked mighty gloomy.

They felt very bitter against those of their late associates who had stood by the company and thus retained their positions in the mill.

David Jobkins developed into one of the most violent of the kickers.

When he saw that their cause was practically lost, he tried to incite the mob to some act of violence that might frighten the new hands into shaking their jobs.

Most of the malcontents, while they listened to his harangue, rather objected to having a run-in with the police—a number of whom had been specially detailed to patrol the neighborhood and keep order.

Jobkins, however, found a few kindred spirits who expressed their readiness to go to any extreme to bring the company to terms.

They adjourned to a nearby barroom to talk it over.

It was decided to make an attempt to blow up the mill on the following night.

One of the men, an ingenious mechanic, said he would put together an infernal machine, with clock-work attachment, which would do the business.

The half-dozen conspirators then adjourned to meet again next day.

A man lounging about the same saloon next morning overheard Jobkins threaten to do up Jack Clyde at the first chance he could get.

This man's daughter was employed at the mill, being one of those who had not gone out on strike.

When he got home that night he told his daughter to warn the boy next day.

The girl, however, thought the matter serious enough to demand immediate attention.

As she lived only a short distance from Bertha Garland's home, and knowing that Jack Clyde called on Bertha quite often, she ran over to the Garland house to tell Bertha about Jobkins' threat.

Bertha was very much alarmed for the safety of the boy she thought so much of, and, thanking her friend for bringing her the ominous intelligence, she put on her hat and started down the road to the Frost cottage, intending to warn Jack.

Aunt Sue and Gertie Clyde were surprised, though none the less pleased, to see Bertha, whom they thought a good deal of.

It was the first time the girl had ever called to see Jack, and, as she looked worried when Aunt Sue said that the boy was not at home, Mrs. Frost surmised there was something more in her visit than appeared on the surface.

Bertha, however, not wishing to worry Jack's relatives, evaded an explanation of what had brought her to the cottage.

"He went back to the mill after supper," said Aunt Sue.

"The mill is not running at night," replied Bertha, in surprise.

"I know," answered Mrs. Frost; "but Manager Burnside wanted to see Jack in the office. I believe he intends to promote him to a higher position—in fact, I think Jack is going to take the place in the office formerly held by young Dean."

"Do you really think so?" asked the girl, with a look of pleasure.

"So Jack intimated to me."

"I am so glad," replied Bertha. "He deserves to get ahead."

"Oh, he'll make his way up in the world all right," said Aunt Sue, proudly. "Jack is the smartest boy in town. Look how easily he made twenty-one hundred dollars with that one thousand dollars the company presented him with. It was his money that paid for that cottage up the road we're going to move into in a week or two, and he has nineteen hundred dollars in the bank besides. He'll be a rich man one of these days. I haven't the least doubt."

When Bertha left the Frost cottage she decided, notwithstanding that it was a lonesome walk in the darkness, to go to the mill, and if she saw a light in the office to wait until Jack came out; for she feared Jobkins and some of his cronies might be aware of the boy's presence at the mill, in which event it was not improbable that they would lie in wait for him on his way home.

It wasn't every girl that would have had the courage to undertake that walk, for the mill was situated in a section

of the town that was thinly built upon, and, consequently, wore a deserted and gloomy aspect at night.

It was a warm June evening, but the sky was overcast, and the lights along her way being few and far between, she grew more and more nervous as she drew nearer and nearer to the mill.

Suddenly she stopped.

The sound of men's voices fell on her ear—voices deep and gruff.

Whoever the men might be, she had no wish to meet them.

They were following at such a rapid rate that she looked around to find a spot where she could hide and let them pass.

She knew the road well, for she passed over it twice a day, and remembered that there was an old shed a little way ahead in which she could conceal herself.

It stood back a dozen yards or so from the road, and she hastened her steps in that direction.

She flew up the well-worn path that led to the shed, and had just time to gain the doorway when she made out the dim outline of three figures coming along the road.

Instead of keeping straight on, as she expected they would, the men, to her great dismay, turned into the path and came toward the shed.

Bertha had only time to shrink back in a corner of the place before the men entered the building.

Bertha Garland was a girl with plenty of courage, as we have intimated, but she was nervous and frightened enough as she shrank back in her corner, while the intruders gathered around the opening of the shed and talked together in low tones.

At first she was too alarmed to listen to what they said, but, as she recovered her self-possession a bit, she began to understand the subject of their conversation.

It was not reassuring to her, and her alarm returned when she recognized the voice of David Jobkins, and saw that he was the leader of the party.

The shed was too dark for her to be discovered, unless one of the men struck a match to light his pipe, and the possibility of such a thing happening made her look about for some object behind which she might hide herself.

There was nothing in the place but a heap of hay, and, as it was close to where she stood, she determined to get behind it.

Little by little she managed to crawl behind the pile of fodder and crouch down.

Then she began to listen intently to what the men were saying, thinking they were on the lookout for Jack.

But Jack's name wasn't mentioned.

The three men had something of more importance on their hands at that moment.

She found they were waiting the appearance of a comrade.

"What time was Jackson to be here?" asked one of the men.

"He ought to be here now," replied Jobkins, in an impatient tone. "I can't imagine what's keepin' him."

"He'll bring the machine with him, won't he?"

"What good would it do for him to come without it?" growled the foreman.

"That's so," put in another man. "We couldn't do a thing without that."

"Of course we couldn't," responded Jobkins, gruffly.

"I s'pose Jackson 'll plan it himself, won't he?" said the first speaker. "He ought to know best how to handle such ticklish things."

"Don't worry, Mike Clancy; you won't be asked to do it," answered the foreman, with a sneer. "You and Briggs will have enough to do to keep your eyes skinned for the watchman while Jackson and me attend to the real work."

Bertha wondered what the machine could be that they expected to plant, where they were going to do it, and what their object could be in doing so.

She soon found out.

"Where are you going to put it?" asked Briggs.

"In the engine-room, and after the explosion there won't be any work done in the mill for the next month or two," said Jobkins, with an evil laugh, which was echoed by his companions.

"Can it be that these men mean to blow up the mill tonight?" breathed Bertha. "I must do something to prevent that as soon as I can safely leave this place."

"Hush!" cried Clancy at this point. "Some one is coming."

There was silence in an instant, and Bertha heard a heavy tread approaching the shanty.

"It's Jackson," said Briggs.

"What's been keepin' you?" growled Jobkins, when the newcomer entered the hut.

"I was down at the mill spyin' around. I saw a light in the manager's office."

"I wonder what he's doin' there?" said the foreman.

"He was talkin' to that young shaver, Jack Clyde," replied Jackson.

"The dence he was!" exclaimed Jobkins. "I don't see what business he can have with that cub."

"Don't ask me," laughed Jackson. "I didn't hear what they were talkin' about."

"I'd like to get hold of that little money to-night," said the foreman. "I've a good-sized grudge I'd like to settle with him."

"He ought to be goin' home soon," chuckled Clancy. "You might lay for him on the road if you think you've the time to spare. We'll help you catch him if you want, and help thump him, too. We all owe him somethin' for stickin' by the company and helpin' to do us out of our jobs."

"Aye, that we will," agreed Briggs. "He needs a lesson that he won't soon forget."

"He'll get it, don't you fear, whether it's to-night or later on," said Jobkins, angrily. "And he'll get it good if I've got anythin' to say about it. I mean to put him out of business so he won't do no more work in that mill, or anywhere else for that matter."

He spoke with such a malicious intensity that Bertha's blood chilled with apprehension for Jack's safety.

She must and would try to save him at any hazard.

"Oh, blast the boy!" interjected Jackson. "Let's get down to business."

"Well," said Jobkins, "did you bring the machine?"

"Of course I did. It's under my jacket."

"How do you set it off?"

"It goes off itself."

"What!" cried the other three, beginning to back away from him.

Jackson laughed.

"Don't be afraid. It won't go off now. Do you take me for a fool to put my life in danger carryin' it around with me? It's as harmless as a ring-dove at the present moment," and he drew it forth from its place of concealment. "It's got to be wound up before it becomes dangerous."

"It goes off by clockwork, eh?" said Briggs.

"That's what it does," replied Jackson. "It's my own invention."

"Are you sure it will do the business?" asked Jobkins.

"As sure as you stand there," affirmed the other.

"It will smash the engine, will it?"

"It will wreck the engine-room completely."

"That's all we want to know. I'll help you place it while Clancy and Briggs look after the watchman."

"After you wind it up, how long before it goes off?" inquired Clancy.

"I've got it times for twenty minutes. That'll give us time enough to get a long way from the mill if we don't lag. Did you get something that'll answer for a jimmy to break into the engine-room?" he asked the foreman.

"Sure I did."

"Where is it?"

"Hid behind the straw in yonder corner."

At those words Bertha's heart nearly stopped beating with terror.

If the article they wanted was behind the fodder pile, as soon as Jobkins went to get it he would be sure to discover her concealed there.

What, then, would be the consequence?

CHAPTER X.

JACK IN THE TOILS.

"Hark!" cried Clancy, in a low tone at this moment.

All listened.

"Sounds like a boy whistlin'," said Briggs.

"I'll bet it's Jack Clyde on his way home from the mill," chipped in Jackson.

"Then we'd better nab him," said Jobkins. "We can tie him and leave him in this shanty till we've planted the bomb, then I'll come back and attend to his case."

"I'm with you," replied Clancy. "Two of us will be enough to capture the cub."

So Jackson and Briggs remained in the shanty, while Jobkins and Clancy departed on their errand.

Bertha shivered with fear at the fate that awaited Jack.

But she could do nothing to save him, at least not as things stood.

She waited with strained attention for further developments.

In a few minutes the foreman and Clancy returned, dragging Jack Clyde between them.

"You pair of cowards!" roared the boy. "What game are you up to, anyway?"

"You'll find out in good time," replied Jobkins, between his teeth. "Blame your fist! You almost put my eye out."

"Serves you right for attacking me as you did," retorted Jack. "It took two of you to down me, though. What are you going to do with me?"

"Shut up, you monkey!" snarled the foreman. "There's a bit of rope hangin' somewhere against the wall. Get it down, Jackson, and help me tie him up."

Jackson found the rope without striking a light, and the two men soon bound Jack securely hand and foot.

"Now put somethin' into his mouth for a gag," said Jobkins.

Jackson pulled out the boy's handkerchief and tied it tightly over his mouth.

"He's safe enough now," he said. "Push him out of the way."

"Let me make sure of it," said the foreman, going carefully over the bonds and making certain that Jack couldn't draw his hands out.

Satisfied that the prisoner could not escape by any exertions of his own, Jobkins got on his feet, gave the boy a vicious kick in the thigh, and left him.

The kick was in cowardly revenge for the heavy blow Jack had given him in the road.

"Well, I think we might as well make a start," suggested Jackson. "The sooner we get the job over the better it'll suit me."

"All right," said the foreman. "I'll get that bar now."

"You'll need a light, won't you?" said Clancy.

"Not me. I know just where to put my hand on it. There's too much straw lyin' around loose in this shack for me to strike a light."

As he spoke he started toward the pile of straw behind which Bertha crouched.

The girl's heart sank within her when she heard him moving straight toward the corner where she was hiding.

She held her breath, and her heart beat so loud and so fast that she was afraid it might betray her as it throbbed and thumped against her ribs.

She kept motionless as death in the hope that Jobkins might be able to get what he wanted without noticing her presence; but it was a forlorn chance.

When he was within a foot or so of her he stopped, and she heard him, and almost felt him, stoop down and begin to clear away the straw from the ground.

She could hear him breathe and mutter something about the darkness, as he felt about with his hand within a few inches of her foot.

A minute or two passed in this way, and the only sound being the rustling caused by the man's movements, and a muttered imprecation because he could not readily find what he sought.

"Haven't you found it yet?" asked Jackson, impatiently.

"No. I thought I could put my hand on it at once, but this infernal darkness queers me after all," replied Jobkins, over his shoulder.

"I s'pose we'll have to strike a match for you," said Clancy, putting his hand in his pocket to find one.

"No," replied the foreman. "Wait a moment. I'll have it in a moment."

It was a terrible ordeal for Bertha, for Jobkins was groping within an inch or two of her, and yet, astonishing to relate, he did not seem at all conscious of her presence.

"Ah! I've got it," he exclaimed at last, in a tone of satisfaction.

He rose up with the steel bar in his hand, actually brushing against Bertha's dress.

She drew a breath of relief, as he moved away from the corner.

She knew she had escaped discovery by the narrowest possible margin.

"We'd better throw some of the straw over that boy," said Jackson. "You can't tell but some one might come in here while we're away."

"What's the use of takin' that trouble?" growled Jobkins. "Just shove him under it head first. It won't strangle him, and if it did it wouldn't make no difference, anyhow, as far as I'm concerned."

So Clancy and Briggs grabbed Jack by the legs and pushed him into the pile of straw, his head coming to a rest within less than an inch of Bertha's foot.

"Now he's safe enough, I'll swear," chuckled Clancy.

"Good enough," replied Jackson. "Let's be off."

The four men passed out of the door, and the girl heard their feet trampling on the path which led to the road.

She did not make a move until utter silence reigned once more about the shanty, then she stepped out from behind the straw and ran to the door.

Looking toward the road, she saw no signs of the men.

"They are gone," she breathed. "Thank heaven for that. Now to release Jack—dear Jack, how I do love him. I'd be willing to suffer anything for his sake. I wonder if he cares as much for me?"

She ran lightly back to the pile of straw and began tearing it away with a feverish energy that soon accomplished her purpose.

In a moment or two she had the boy's face exposed.

She could barely see the outline of his countenance in the dark as she bent down over him, and she felt for the gag across his mouth.

"It is I, Jack—Bertha Garland," she talked to him in a rapid, almost hysterical whisper, so excited was she at the moment. "I'm going to save you, Jack. I'm going to get you loose somehow right away."

"Bertha, is it really you?" asked Jack, in great astonishment, as soon as she had removed the handkerchief from across his mouth.

"Yes, yes," she replied. "Oh, these ropes are tied so tightly. What shall I do to get them loose?"

"Put your hand in my right trouser's pocket and you will find my jackknife," replied Jack, eagerly.

She did as he directed, and was soon sawing the rope that held his arms.

Snap went the strands, and Jack's arms were free.

"Now you can cut the rest yourself better than I can," she said, in a glad tone.

It didn't take the boy a minute to completely free himself.

"Now, Bertha, tell me how you knew I was a prisoner in here?" he asked her.

"I knew it because I was hiding in this shanty when David Jenkins and Patrick Clancy brought you here. I could tell by their words and from the sound when they threw you on the floor and bound you. I could not tell whether I would be able to help you or not, for I was in a tremble lest they should find me here. I dare not think what they might have done to me if they had."

"But how came you to be here at all, Bertha?" asked Jack, wonderingly.

"Martha Stebbings brought me word to-night that Mr. Jobkins had sworn to get even with you for reasons I cannot understand, unless it is because you stuck to the company. I went over to your house to warn you, and found you had gone to the mill to see the manager. Fearing that Mr. Jobkins would learn of your whereabouts, as it seems he did, and waylay you on your way home, I started for the mill myself. When I got as far as this place, three men, of whom Mr. Jobkins was one, came along behind me, and, to escape observation, I rushed into this shanty. To my alarm, they came here, too."

"What a dear, brave girl you are, Bertha," interrupted Jack, with some enthusiasm. "And to think you dared venture down in this locality in the gloom of a dark night on my account! I shall never be able to thank you enough," he added, stealing his arm around her waist.

"Could I do less for you, Jack, when I knew you were in danger? Didn't you save me from a frightful injury, if not death, a short time ago? Oh, Jack, I could not sit still at home and think of what might happen to you through that man's revengeful disposition."

Jack drew the girl's unresisting form to him and kissed her on the lips.

"Oh, Jack!" she cried, in blushing confusion.

"That's the only way I can truly thank you, Bertha," he said with a cheerful laugh. "But go on. You had something more to tell me."

"Jack, we must do something at once to save the mill," she cried.

"Save the mill! What do you mean?" he asked, a bit startled.

"Those men intend to blow up the engine-room to-night."

"Good gracious!" ejaculated the boy. "How do you know that?"

"I heard them talking about it before you came up the road.

They have some kind of a clock-work bomb that two of them mean to place in the engine-room while the others keep on the lookout for the night watchman."

"Then they left here to carry out that terrible object, did they?" cried Jack, excitedly.

"Yes."

"I have no time to lose, then. They have too much start now for me to head them off. The best I can do is to try and frustrate their design somehow."

"You must take me with you, Jack. I dare not go home alone. I heard one of the men say the bomb was timed to go off in twenty minutes after it was wound up."

"Come, then, Bertha. We can cut across lots and save some time. You say that it is the engine-room they propose to wreck?"

"Yes."

"That would be a terrible disaster for the mill. It would put it out of commission for some time to come. We certainly must prevent such a thing if we can."

They had run down the path and crossed the road while speaking.

Then Jack helped the girl to climb the fence, and once over they started at a rapid pace for the mill, a quarter of a mile away.

CHAPTER XL.

THE EXPLOSION.

All was quiet in the vicinity of the mill when they reached the block in which it stood.

"You had better stand in the shadow of the office doorway while I climb the fence and get into the mill yard," said Jack to Bertha.

She reluctantly agreed to do this when she saw there was no other course for her to adopt.

"You must be very careful, Jack," she begged of him. "Don't let those men catch you, and look out that the bomb does not explode when you are near it. Remember, it is timed for twenty minutes. If the men have already placed it and gone away, you have not many minutes to remove it in."

"I will look out, don't you fear, Bertha. I am in no hurry to join the angels yet," with a reassuring laugh.

Then he made for a point in the fence where he thought he could get over, and inside of a minute he was in the yard of the mill.

There wasn't the slightest sign of the four men.

The yard was as silent as a graveyard.

He drew near the engine-room, which was a brick extension to the main building, with great caution, for he did not mean to be taken by surprise if he could help himself.

Suddenly he stumbled over an object in the shadow of the mill.

It was soft, and seemed like a thing of life.

Jack bent down to examine it and found that it was the night watchman bound and gagged.

In a jiffy the boy had his knife out and was cutting the man's bonds.

Then he removed the gag.

"Now, Harper," said Jack, eagerly and earnestly. "What about these men—there were four of them—do you know whether they've left the place yet?"

"The rascals who put me out of business, you mean?" replied the watchman.

"Of course."

"Yes. They left by the gate about five minute ago. They broke into the engine-room, I think, and were only a short time on the premises. What their object was I cannot guess, as I had a good view of them when they went away, and they did not seem to be taking anything with them."

"I should say not," replied the boy. "They did not come here to steal, but to blow up the engine-room."

"Blow up the engine-room!" gasped the watchman.

"That's right," replied Jack. "But there isn't a minute to be lost if we are to save the place and not get blown up ourselves. Come on. We must find the bomb they left there. It is timed to explode in twenty minutes, and probably more than half of that time has already expired. We must move lively."

Jack, without losing another moment in additional explanation, darted for the engine-room, a few yards away.

The door, which the rascals had forced, stood ajar, and the boy pulled it open.

It was dark as pitch within.

How would he be able to find, in the brief interval that

remained to him, that infernal machine which the scoundrels had placed somewhere in the room?

He must light the reflector-lamp the first thing.

As he put his hand in his pocket for a match, he heard a loud ticking not many feet away.

He thought it was the clock on the wall until he realized that the sound came from the floor.

"That must come from the clockwork inside the bomb," he breathed, excitedly.

He struck the match and advanced toward the spot whence the sound proceeded.

He soon saw a dark box-like object standing under the big steel driving arm of the engine.

The tick-tick sound came from its interior.

Jack's heart almost stopped beating, and the perspiration came out on his forehead as he gazed down at the menacing object.

What if it went off in another moment or two, where would he and the engine be?

But the urgency of the situation caused the brave boy to throw off the benumbing sensation that for a moment paralyzed his limbs.

Throwing all thought of his personal safety to the winds, he swooped down on the bomb.

Grabbing it in his two hands, he started rapidly for the door, outside of which stood the watchman, afraid to enter.

Then he dashed for the fence, and, with a tremendous effort, he threw the bomb as far over the fence as he could.

Hardly had it struck the ground when it exploded with a terrific report on the night air, seeming to split the very heavens with a deafening crash.

The earth seemed to shake and totter under Jack's feet, and a section of the fence was blown in upon him.

He went down in the midst of the debris.

The watchman came running forward, as he crawled out from under the splintered timbers.

"Are you hurt?" asked Harper.

"No," replied Jack, after he had spit out a mouthful of dust. "That explosion will alarm the town, but I must telephone the police and the manager just the same. Let me into the office."

The watchman admitted him to the building.

The first thing Jack did was to run and throw up one of the windows opening on the street and look out in order to let Bertha, who had been terribly frightened by the force of the explosion, know that he was safe.

Then he rushed to the telephone and communicated with the police station first, and afterward with Manager Burnside, who said he would come right over.

By the time the police reached the scene, Mr. Burnside came up, and Jack gave them a full explanation of the situation, which was corroborated by Bertha Garland.

All hands visited the scene of the explosion.

A big hole had been blown in the street near the walk, and a good bit of the fence had been wrecked.

The watchman attested the fact that Jack had carried the bomb from the engine-room and thrown it over the fence.

The managers and the officers, too, regarded the heroic boy with undisguised admiration.

"You've got a wonderful nerve, Jack Clyde," said Mr. Burnside. "You certainly saved the engine-room and that end of the main building, but, my heavens! lad. You took an awful risk! If that infernal machine had exploded in your hands there would not have been enough left of you to make a respectable funeral."

"Well, sir, it was my duty to save the mill if I could," replied Jack, with the modesty of a true hero, "and I am glad that I succeeded."

"Well, you've done the biggest thing that ever happened in this town," replied the manager, "and you may rest assured the company will reward you well for it. I wouldn't have taken the risk you did for a cool million," and the gentleman wiped the perspiration from his forehead, for he realized the gravity of the case.

"Can you furnish us with the identity of the scoundrels at the bottom of this outrage?" asked one of the officers.

"I can," replied Jack. "They are men who worked for some time in the mill before the recent trouble. The ringleader is David Jobkins. The others are Patrick Clancy, Jim Briggs and Peter Jackson. If you get a hustle on you may be able to catch them, but I fancy they'll get out of town as soon as they can."

People attracted by the explosion began to congregate in the neighborhood by this time.

Nobody could guess the true cause of the fearful sound which had disturbed and frightened many of the inhabitants.

The general impression at first prevailed that the boiler at the mill had blown up.

Jack escorted Bertha to her home, and then continued on to his own, where he had quite an exciting story to tell his aunt and Gertie.

They were both horrified at the narrow escape Jack had had for his life.

The Northbridge Times had a sensational story about the explosion in next morning's paper, and gave Jack Clyde full credit for the part he played in the affair.

People all over town praised the boy's courage, and wondered at his nerve.

The president of the company came to the mill next day, and personally shook the mill boy by the hand and commended him in no uncertain terms.

The police did not succeed in catching Jobkins and his accomplices anywhere in town, and it was concluded that they had made tracks for Boston.

On Friday there was a meeting of the directors of the mill company, when resolutions praising Jack were passed unanimously, and the sum of \$5,000 was voted him as an evidence of the company's appreciation for his signal services.

CHAPTER XII.

JACK PUTS THROUGH ANOTHER REAL ESTATE DEAL.

Flora Watson was grievously disappointed because of David Jobkins' failure to do up Jack Clyde according to their arranged programme.

She was further angered by the knowledge that Jack had been installed in the position formerly held by Morris Dean.

Then, on top of it all was the reflection that the boy she hated had been presented with two rewards aggregating \$6,000 by the company, and that Bertha Garland had retained her position at the mill, while she (Flora) had sacrificed hers.

She had no sympathy for the ex-foreman, now a fugitive from justice, but she did grieve over the fate that faced Dean, about to be tried for the attempted robbery of the office safe.

She had hoped Jobkins would be successful in putting Jack out of the way, so he would not be able to appear at the trial to testify against the ex-clerk, and now that expectation was shattered.

It seemed as if everything had worked against her, and she was furious at the outlook.

To make matters even worse, Morris Dean, who, as we have already stated, was out on bail, while his less fortunate confederate, Nelson Spavinger, languished in jail because nobody who knew him had confidence enough in him to become responsible for his appearance in court when his trial came on, studiously avoided her after the failure of their joint plans to get the best of Jack Clyde.

In her endeavors to recover lost ground with Dean she discovered that Morris was making fresh attempts to get in with Bertha Garland.

Although there wasn't the slightest chance of his making any headway at all with the beautiful mill girl, Flora Watson, nevertheless, became insanely jealous of Bertha, and began to plot how she might do her some dreadful injury.

"I'd like to spoil her beauty for her, the hussy," gritted the angry girl. "I'd be willing to go to jail to get square with her."

Finally she decided upon the fiendish trick of attacking Bertha.

She bided her time, making guarded inquiries around among her friends and acquaintances, in an effort to discover where she could find her supposed rival of an evening.

Perhaps, now that she was in a position to carry out her desperate project, her conscience interposed, for she hesitated to put her plans into execution.

She kept gloating over the fact that the means was within her reach to do up Bertha whenever she managed to screw her courage up to the sticking point.

It was about this time that Jack Clyde carried through another speculation.

He was on very friendly terms with a certain young real estate man named Will Leslie, who had only lately established himself in Northbridge.

One evening Leslie met Jack and told him confidentially that the B. & M. Railroad Company was going to build an extension to its freight yards which would take in all the ground as far as the end of the block.

"The company has employed me to buy up the property on the quiet on the best terms I can get it for," remarked Leslie.

"It will prove a good thing for me when I send in my bill for commissions."

"I congratulate you on getting such a snap. How came you to connect? There are several old real estate men in town. I should have thought the railroad company would have given one of them the preference."

"Well, you see, I have a little pull, in a way. An uncle of mine is on very friendly terms with one of the directors of the road, and it was through his efforts I was selected to do the business."

"Have you started in to buy yet?" asked Jack.

"Yes. I've got about a quarter of the ground secured, and expect to have options on the balance by the end of the week."

"I suppose you haven't had any difficulty about securing the land at a fair figure, have you?"

"Oh, no. You see, not one of the owners is on to the fact that the railroad company is in the market for the land."

"If they were wise to the real situation the company would have to pay more to secure the ground they want."

"That's right, they would. I hope you won't breathe a word I have told you about this thing. It wouldn't be fair," said Leslie, hastily, beginning to realize that he had made a mistake in telling Jack about the matter.

"Oh, I sha'n't say a word about it, Leslie; but I can't help taking advantage of the chance you have placed before me to make a little haul out of it myself."

"How do you mean?" asked the young real estate man anxiously.

"Why, I bought the corner plot, 100x100, on the corner of Cambridge street and Railroad avenue, three weeks ago."

"You bought it?"

"Well, my aunt bought it for me, but I put up the money."

"You're joking, I guess."

"No, I am not. The ground is practically mine, for my aunt will take title next week; that is, unless the B. & M. Railroad will pay me a handsome bonus for my option," grinned Jack. Leslie was a good deal taken aback.

"I see I made a mistake in being so confidential with you to-night," he said, regretfully.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Jack. "I bought that property to hold for a rise. I got it at a comparatively reasonable figure. In fact it's been in the market some time with no takers. I had sixty-nine hundred dollars in the bank that I was looking around to invest in real estate, and it happened I picked that out and took it. I had no idea the railroad company intended buying up that ground until you told me just now; but even if you had not confided that fact to me I should have held out for a good price anyway, as I could well afford to hold that ground for some years yet to come."

"Then I suppose I'll have to dicker with you for it?" said Leslie.

"No. There'll be no dickering about it. You go on and buy the rest of the ground and then come to me with a certified check for five thousand dollars, and you can have the property after my aunt has taken title. Or if you prefer to take the option off my hands as it stands you can have it any day this week for three thousand dollars."

"But I didn't expect to give over three thousand dollars altogether, or thirty-five hundred dollars at the outside," protested Leslie.

"Then I'm doing you a favor in a way."

"How are you?"

The more the company has to pay for the property the more commission you will make, won't you?"

"That's true; but I am in honor bound to get the ground at the lowest possible price."

"Of course you are," replied Jack, cheerfully, "and I have given you my bed-rock figure. If the company doesn't care to give it let them build their fence so as to exclude my corner. They don't have to have it to make a yard. But still I think it will pay them to make the deal."

The result of the matter was that the railroad company agreed to pay Mrs. Frost five thousand dollars for the corner plot, and as Jack had purchased it for twenty-five hundred dollars he made a good thing out of the deal.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FAKE MESSAGE.

In spite of the cloud which hung over Morris Dean, and the practical certainty that he would be convicted when his case came to trial, the young man showed himself about town with considerable bravado.

He could be seen every afternoon and night at the North-

bridge Billiard Parlors playing pool with boon companions who had no objection in the least to his society.

Where he got his money from, now that he was not working, was a mystery no one inquired into.

The general impression had been at first that his father, to avoid the disgrace of his son's conviction, would encourage him to jump his bail; but so far there was no signs of Morris taking such advantage of his liberty.

Morris, however, didn't intend to be tried if he could help it; but he didn't care to skip out until he had revenged himself on Jack Clyde.

He had had great hopes that David Jobkins, spurred on by Flora Watson, would do the trick.

When his hopes in that direction were frustrated, he put his mind down to accomplishing his revenge himself.

He found, however, that he had a large contract on his hands, for no reasonable opportunity presented itself for him to get in his work.

He would not give up, though the date set for his trial was drawing alarmingly near, and his father and brother begged him to make himself scarce before it would be too late for him to get away in safety.

Twice his father gave him money under the impression that he would use it to fly to parts unknown, but each time he changed his mind at the last moment.

After turning down several schemes he had formed against Jack Clyde because of some obstacle that turned up to interfere with his carrying them out, he finally decided to reach Jack through Bertha Garland.

He was satisfied from his observations that Jack and Bertha were as good as an engaged couple, and he felt sure anything that hurt Bertha would break up Jack.

Besides, he was stuck on the girl himself, and he thought he saw a way to kill two birds with one stone.

He never dreamed that Flora Watson had designs against Bertha herself, nor that the jealous girl was watching his every move like a hawk.

So he formulated a plan that he thought might be successful.

He found that Jack was often at the mill office for an hour or two of an evening, attending to the work of one of the clerks who was ill.

The evenings were now warm and generally bright, as it was in the latter part of June, and so Bertha frequently walked from her home to the mill to meet Jack and enjoy the return walk with him.

Morris knew this, too.

So one night while Jack was working at his desk, and thinking it was pretty nearly time for Bertha to show up, a boy came to the door with a message which he said he brought from Mrs. Frost, stating that Gertie had been taken alarmingly ill and that he must come home directly.

"What's the matter with my sister?" asked Jack anxiously.

"I don't know," answered the boy, in a shifty way, "but you must go home without losing a moment."

Jack was greatly alarmed and disturbed.

He loved his crippled sister dearly, and to have anything happen to her he felt would break his heart.

He must go home at once, of course, but what about Bertha?

It might be fifteen or twenty minutes yet before she reached the mill.

He would walk part of the way toward her house and try to head her off, but to provide against his failure to meet her he gave the boy a quarter to wait an hour for her, and if she came to go home with her.

He started off at a rapid walk after locking up the office, but did not see the girl anywhere along the road.

Then he turned off toward his own cottage.

He arrived home in a state of nervous excitement, almost dreading to enter the house.

When he dashed into the little sitting-room, there, to his great surprise, sat his aunt calmly sewing and his sister reading a book on the lounge.

"Why, Jack, what is the matter?" exclaimed Aunt Sue, regarding his flushed and troubled face with no little anxiety, while Gertie uttered an exclamation of alarm.

"Matter!" cried Jack, hoarsely. "Isn't Gertie ill?"

"Ill! The idea! What put that into your head? She doesn't look sick, does she?"

"No, she doesn't, that's a fact," replied the boy, drawing a deep breath of relief as he sank into a chair and wiped his heated forehead with his handkerchief.

"Then what made you think she was ill?"

"Because I just got a message from you that she was dangerously sick, and that I must come home at once."

"You got such a message from me!" cried Mrs. Frost, in astonishment.

"Yes, a boy brought it to the mill office not half an hour ago."

"Well, it's very funny. I did not send such a preposterous message as that to you. Why should I?"

"Then I don't understand what it all means," replied Jack, with a perplexed air.

"Who was the boy?"

"I don't know him. I never saw him before."

"And he said I sent him with such a message to you?"

"He did. It broke me all up, for I couldn't bear to think of anything serious happening to Gertie," and he cast a fond look at his crippled sister. "So I came home right away without even waiting for Bertha, whom I expected to call at the mill, as she usually does when I stop there after dark."

"Poor Jack!" cried his sister, reaching out and stroking her brother's hand tenderly, for there was no one in the world like Jack in her opinion.

Aunt Sue was very much puzzled over the situation.

She couldn't see what object any boy had in carrying such a falsehood to Jack.

Suddenly the boy started to his feet.

"Somebody put up a job on me, sure as you live," he said.

"Who ever it was wanted to get me away from the mill. Now, why should anybody want to get me away from the building? It must be there has been some new plot hatched against the company, though the strike is over and done with two weeks ago. I must return at once and see what's in the wind."

"Look out, Jack, that you do not run into some danger," warned his aunt.

"Yes, do be careful, brother," put in Gertie, anxiously.

"Oh, don't worry yourselves about me. I can take care of myself every time," replied the courageous boy, stoutly.

"I know you're strong and brave, Jack," continued Aunt Sue, "but you must be on your guard that some one does not strike you a foul blow in the dark."

"I'll look out for that, too. I'll run around to Bertha's first and see whether she has got home yet."

With those words Jack clapped his hat on again, and started for the Garland cottage, about a third of a mile distant, and away from the mill.

Mrs. Garland came to the door.

"Is Bertha home?" he asked, eagerly.

"Why no," replied Mrs. Garland, "she went to the mill to meet you. Haven't you seen her?"

"No. I was called home on a hurry message that proved to be false. When did Bertha leave for the mill?"

"About an hour ago."

"Then she should be home by this time," replied Jack, in some excitement. "I gave the boy who brought me the bogus message a quarter to wait for Bertha and come home with her. Maybe he didn't stop at all. I must hurry to the mill and see where she can be. I may meet her on the road. At any rate, I ought to."

Jack, not a little worried over the situation, and anxious for Bertha's safety, started hurriedly up the road for the cotton mill.

CHAPTER XIV.

BERTHA GARLAND AT BAY.

No sooner had Jack departed from the mill office than the form of a young man stepped out into the road from behind a board fence opposite.

He had the face and figure of Morris Dean.

"You're all right, Pixy," he said, clapping the boy on the shoulder. "You managed that fine. Now I'm going into the office," and he took a small jimmy from his pocket and walked up to the door.

"Oh, I say, you're not going to break into the safe again, are you?" asked the boy, nervously.

"No, of course not."

"Then what's yer game?"

"Never you mind, Pixy. You do what I tell you and no harm will come to you. I'm going to light up just as if Jack Clyde was still here. When that Bertha Garland comes along, just tell her Jack is doing something on the first floor of the mill, and that he said she was to come in there, see?"

"I see," replied the boy, with a grin. "How about the watchman?"

"I fixed him an hour ago."

"What did you do to him?"

"When I got in the yard I hunted up his supper pail, and

there I found, as I expected, his bottle of cold coffee. I dosed it good and strong. He always takes a drink of it every hour, and I waited around till he came up and took a drink. It knocked him silly in about one minute. He wouldn't wake up now if the mill fell in on top of him."

The boy smiled all over his freckled face.

By this time Morris Dean had effected an entrance into the office and had relighted the lamps.

"Now, Pixy, as soon as the girl goes through that door into the mill itself, just you lock it. You see the key is in the lock. Then turn out all the lamps and skidoo. Your work will be over."

"All right. Where's me money you promised?"

"There you are," and Morris handed him a bill, which the boy looked at eagerly and then stowed away in his pocket.

Morris would not have been particularly elated to have known that while he was lighting the lamps and talking to the boy, a pair of snapping black eyes were watching his movements from behind the board fence he himself had but shortly before vacated.

They were the jealous eyes of Flora Watson, who had got into the habit of late of following Morris wherever he went, because she suspected he was trying to meet Bertha Garland.

"Now," said Morris to Pixy, "go out in the road and wait. As soon as you see Bertha Garland coming, whistle, so I'll have time to hide myself in the mill."

"All right," grinned the boy, going outside.

In about five minutes Bertha came tripping down the road.

Pixy saw her and gave the whistle agreed on.

Flora Watson saw her, too, and her thin red lips closed tightly while her eyes flashed fire.

"So," she hissed, vindictively, "that hussy has actually come to the mill to meet Morris, has she? I'll fix her! She shall never have him. Never! Never! Never!"

The furious girl stamped her foot on the ground and glared balefully at the little beauty whom she supposed to be her successful rival, but who, all unconscious of her danger, was walking into the snare spread for her by Morris Dean.

"You're Bertha Garland, aren't you?" asked Pixy, when she came up.

"Yes," she answered, in some surprise at his greeting.

"Jack Clyde told me to watch for you out here, and when you came along I was to tell you he's in the mill, on the first floor, doin' somethin', and that he wants you to come in there."

"Thank you," replied the unsuspecting girl, walking into the office.

"Go right through that door," said Pixy, pointing.

"Yes, I know the way," she answered, with a smile.

As soon as she passed through, Pixy whistled again, closed the door and softly locked it.

Then he proceeded to put out the lamps.

As soon as the office was dark he stepped out into the road, closed the door behind him, and started for the town proper.

Hardly had he disappeared than Flora Watson darted across the road, tried the door, and finding that it was not locked, entered the office.

She listened intently.

"They must be in the mill," she muttered, feeling her way toward the door which Pixy had locked.

She found it fast, of course, but she felt the key in the lock and she quietly turned it and let herself into the entry between the office and the mill.

In the meantime Bertha Garland passed across the entry and into the first floor of the mill.

There was a room on one side where packets of cotton were temporarily stored.

A light shone through the partly open doorway.

As the rest of the mill was dark she surmised that Jack was in this room.

She crossed quickly to the door and entered.

One of the standard oil lamps stood on a small table, but there was no one in the room.

"Jack," she said, "where are you?"

"Here I am," replied a voice not at all like Jack's.

She turned around in surprise, and there, framed in the doorway, stood the last person she expected to see—Morris Dean.

"Aren't you glad to see me?" he asked, with a slight grin, pulling the door to and turning the key in the lock.

"What are you doing here?" she inquired as soon as her surprise would permit her to speak.

"What am I doing here? Oh, I came here to see you," he replied.

"To see me?" she cried, wonderingly.

"Yes. I am going to leave town right away, for," with a wicked laugh, "it isn't healthy for me to stay in Northbridge much longer."

"I have nothing to do with your going or staying, Morris Dean," she replied, impatiently. "I came here to see Jack Clyde. Where is he?"

"He is not in the building," laughed Morris, maliciously.

"Not—in—the—building!" gasped Bertha. "Why, that boy said—"

"He said what I told him to say—that Jack Clyde was in here, but he isn't. That was only a ruse on my part to get you in here where I could talk to you alone."

"Talk to me alone! What do you mean?" she cried, a shadow of fear for the first time crossing her thoughts.

She realized that she was alone with him in that great building, in the room, shut away in the very heart of the mill, where not even a sound could possibly reach the outside.

"I mean that I have seized the first chance I have ever got to tell you that I love you. I am going to leave Northbridge to-night, and I want you to go with me."

"Are you mad, Morris Dean?" exclaimed the girl, desperately.

"Not that I'm aware of," he replied, coolly. "I want you to understand that you are in my power. I knew you were coming here to-night to meet Jack Clyde. I determined that you should not—that I would meet you instead. I sent a fake message to Jack, while he was in the office, by that boy you spoke to outside. I said his crippled sister was desperately ill. I knew that would fetch him. It did, for he started hot foot for his home. That put the game in my hands, see?"

"You coward!" cried the mill girl, in contemptuous anger.

He started as if stung, then he laughed harshly.

"It doesn't matter what I am. I love you and I'm going to have you go with me to-night, by fair means or foul."

"No!" she answered, as sharp as a pistol shot.

"Then I shall make you," he said, rushing forward to seize her in his arms.

For a moment Bertha was panic-stricken, but the next her eyes fell on a bar of steel standing against the wall.

She snatched it up and held it aloft, threateningly.

"Stand back!" she cried. "If you dare come a foot nearer to me I'll kill you!"

She faced him defiantly, with panting breast and flashing eye, like a hunted animal at bay.

It was evident she was full of fight from her feet up.

CHAPTER XV.

NEMESIS.

Morris Dean quailed before the dangerous light which flashed from the girl's eyes, and for a moment he hesitated.

Then he darted forward, and, with a quick, cunning movement, wrested the bar from Bertha's hand and tossed it to the other end of the room.

"Now," he said, triumphantly, "what can you do?"

She made no reply, but, drawing back, faced him as dauntlessly as ever.

"You're a spunky little thing, aren't you?" he said, sneeringly. "But it won't do you any good. I am boss of this ranch now, and you've got to knuckle to me. You have got to go away with me to-night, whether you like it or not."

"I don't see how you're going to make me do it," she replied, scornfully.

"Don't you? Look here."

He drew from an inside pocket a small bottle and a handkerchief.

"This is chloroform. A few drops on this handkerchief pressed against your mouth and nostrils will quiet you for hours. When you wake up you'll be miles from Northbridge."

A shudder of horror went through Bertha's body.

Was there no way of escape for her?

She ran her eye quickly but stealthily over the door behind Morris—the only exit from the room.

She remembered now he had locked it on entering, but the key was in the lock.

If she could only reach that door a moment ahead of him—but how could she do it?

He himself removed part of the difficulty.

He stepped to the table where the lamp stood, removed the cork from the bottle and coolly proceeded to wet the handkerchief with the chloroform.

The crisis was at hand.

She must do something now if ever.

Suddenly a plan, fully formed, rushed into her mind.

Close behind her were several packets of cotton, and near it a large bundle of waste.

She seized two large handfuls of the waste, and, darting behind the table, heaped them on the lamp, which lighted the room, thus shattering the globe and extinguishing the light.

Morris was taken completely by surprise.

While he stood irresolutely by the table she grabbed a couple of packets of cotton and threw them against the further wall, so as to make Morris think she had run there to hide.

The ruse was successful.

"You little vixen!" he cried, "you sha'n't escape me that way."

He rushed at the spot he supposed she was crouching in.

She took instant advantage of this move on his part to dash for the door.

Morris saw at the same moment that he had been deceived and he darted after her.

She turned the key and flung the door wide open.

Just as she was rushing out of the room she felt his arm on her shoulder.

But she managed to elude him and fled down the long room filled with spinning machines.

He tripped over something and measured his length on the floor.

With a slight exclamation of pain he picked himself up and was after her.

Bertha aimed to reach one of the windows at the extreme end room which overlooked the yard.

She intended to throw up the sash and scream for the watchman, not dreaming that the man was lying senseless in a shed near by.

It was a brilliant night, and the rays of the full moon flooded through the many windows of the place, bathing the whole in a gleaming white light.

But this light made her flying figure perfectly clear to Morris, and enabled him to avoid contact with the machinery that might otherwise have confused him.

And while this mad race was in progress, another figure, that of Flora Watson, who had been crouching and listening at the door of the small room during that momentous interview between Bertha and Morris, followed them quickly by another path close to one of the walls.

All the tiger in her nature was now aroused.

Her eyes had at last been opened to the fact that Bertha Garland did not care the least bit for Morris Dean—that she was doing her best to escape from his undesirable attentions—and the jealousy she had so long felt against the girl dropped away from her like a garment cast aside.

In place of it was substituted a feeling of ungovernable rage against Morris Dean.

He had promised to take her with him when he left Northbridge, and now here he was trying to carry away another in her place.

The love she had felt for him seemed suddenly turned to bitter hate, and her outraged soul cried aloud for revenge.

As she followed the young man and the girl he was fast overtaking, she clutched in her right hand a bottle which she had snatched from a shelf in the dark factory.

"You cannot escape me!" cried Morris, reaching forward and seizing Bertha by the arm before she could gain the coveted window.

The girl uttered a piercing scream that echoed through the big room like the wail of a lost soul.

"Scream as much as you want, you little vixen, there's no one to hear you," said Morris, gleefully. "I've got you now and you shall not again escape me."

But there was lots of fight left in Bertha yet.

She was strong, too, and lithe as a panther for her age.

She struck Morris full in the face with her fists, and he staggered back with a snarl of anger, only to recover in a moment and come for her again.

Bertha tried to escape him by dodging around a machine.

As she was light on her feet, she might have succeeded, but she tripped in her haste and fell to the floor.

Before she could rise he had his hand on her arm.

Then he seized her head, bent it back, and, taking the handkerchief saturated with chloroform from his pocket, he tried to press it over her mouth and nostrils.

Bertha, recognizing its pungent aroma, fought desperately to keep his hand away.

Standing over her, however, he had every advantage of the situation.

"Do you mean to murder me?" wailed the girl.

"No. I only want to quiet you, that's all," he replied, grimly.

"Have you no mercy, Morris Dean?"

"Not an ounce. You must go away with me to Boston to-night. I think more of you in one minute than any other girl in Northbridge in a year. Do you know that?"

Then came the sound of light feet moving rapidly across the room.

A tall, lithe, girlish form sprang toward the struggling pair.

"You villain! You lying, perjured villain!" screamed Flora Watson, passionately. "Is this your love for me? Take that!"

She raised her hand and dashed the bottle at Morris Dean's face.

It broke on his cheek and scattered its contents over his countenance.

He uttered a terrible cry, released Bertha and staggered back, tripping over the same obstacle which had downed the girl, and lay squirming in agony on the floor.

Bertha got on her feet, but so bewildered was she by the appearance of Flora Watson, whom she recognized, as well as by the agonizing cries of the prostrate Morris, that instead of fleeing she remained rooted to the spot.

"It serves him right," said Flora, coldly. "He deceived me, played with me, and I have revenged myself upon him."

She turned away, drawing Bertha with her.

At that moment the rapid tread of a manly foot was heard on the floor, and in another moment Jack Clyde confronted the two girls.

CHAPTER XVI.

RISING IN THE WORLD.

"Bertha!" exclaimed Jack. "How came you in the mill?"

He flashed a suspicious glance at Flora, for he knew the girls were not friends.

"Oh, Jack, Jack!" cried Bertha, running to him and sobbing on his shoulder. "I've—I've had such a narrow escape."

"From what, Bertha?" he asked, putting his arm about her, reassuringly.

"From Morris Dean."

Jack now noticed the plaintive cries of the young ex-clerk, and he walked to the spot where he lay and looked down at him in astonishment.

"What is the matter with him? He seems to be in great pain."

"Ask Flora," returned Bertha. "She knows best."

"Well," said Jack, turning on the handsome brunette, "what is the matter with him?"

"I injured him," she answered, doggedly. "I flung a bottle and it hit him."

Jack knelt over the suffering youth.

He saw he could do nothing to relieve Dean's pain.

The only thing he could do was to lift him in his arms and drag him out into the office, where he telephoned for a physician, explaining what had happened to Morris Dean, and begging him to hasten to the mill office to relieve his agony.

While waiting for the doctor to come, Jack listened to Bertha's recital of what she had gone through from the moment she had fallen into the trap set for her by Morris.

As for Flora, she walked away from the place, calm and defiant, and Jack made no effort to detain her.

The physician brought remedies with him that partially eased Dean's sufferings.

The bottle had contained an acid, which burnt the boy's skin.

He and Jack, accompanied by Bertha, then assisted Morris to his home.

"I feel sorry for him," said Jack, as he and Bertha walked home in the moonlight, "but still if it hadn't been for Flora's action he would probably have succeeded in drugging you before I reached the mill, though I don't see how he expected to carry you away."

This part of Dean's scheme was explained next morning when a horse and buggy were found standing a short distance from the mill.

A stable keeper recognized the rig as one he had rented to Morris Dean.

Jack and Bertha expected that Flora Watson would be arrested next day.

Nothing of the kind occurred, as Morris refused to explain how he had come by the burns, except that he intimated it was an accident. In fact, Flora did not know what was in the bottle.

His face was badly disfigured.

This misfortune prevented him from making his escape from the trial, which came on a week afterward.

Considerable pressure was brought to bear on Jack, especially to induce him to make his evidence against Morris as favorable to that youth as possible.

He consented to this, and in pursuance thereof when he went on the stand he put strong stress on the interview between Morris and Nelson Spavinger he had overheard in the old shanty on the Northbridge road that rainy night.

Morris, in his own defense, corroborated Jack's words, and swore he was in the act of closing the safe after taking the single package of \$100, when the mill boy trapped him.

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, coupled with a recommendation to the mercy of the court.

The result was that the judge, after several days' delay, suspended sentence, and Morris was allowed to go free.

Nelson Spavinger was tried for his connection with the affair, was convicted by Morris Dean's testimony, and was sentenced for one year in prison.

Shortly after Dean's trial, Bertha Garland had an interview with Manager Burnside, and succeeded in getting Flora Watson back in the mill, for which favor Flora expressed her gratitude to Bertha, and ever after maintained a friendly attitude toward her.

A few weeks later David Jobbins and Peter Jackson were arrested in Chicago on the ordinary charge of "drunk and disorderly."

At the most their sentence was ten days in the city jail.

Unfortunately for them, however, they were identified in court by a visitor from Northbridge who had come West on business.

He notified the police authorities that the men were wanted in Northbridge on a very serious charge, and he also telegraphed the facts to the town police.

Extradition papers were secured and two officers were sent to Chicago to bring them East as soon as their ten days' detention had expired.

They were duly tried, convicted on the evidence given by Bertha and Jack Clyde, and sentenced to a ten-year term in the penitentiary.

On the first of the year Jack, having given such evidence of proficiency in his minor clerkship, was promoted to a higher position in the office.

During the spring of the following year he purchased, through his aunt, a new business building on Main street, on which he paid \$9,000 cash and gave a mortgage for \$7,000.

The property was easily worth \$20,000, but Jack got it at a fair bargain because of business reverses to the owner.

Two years afterward, just before he married Bertha Garland, he sold the property for \$25,000, making a clear profit on it of \$9,000, besides a certain profit on his rentals.

At any rate, when Jack was married his capital had increased to nearly \$30,000, all but the \$6,000 he had received from the mill company having been accumulated through clever real estate deals.

He had also been advanced to the post of cashier in the mill office.

Of course, after her marriage, Bertha did not work in the mill any more.

She became the proud mistress of a brand new house that Jack built for her.

At her husband's desire, Aunt Sue and his sister Gertie came to live with them, and no family jars ever disturbed the happiness of the Clyde home.

Soon after little Jack, Jr., was born to complete the joy of the young people, Mr. Burnside resigned his position as manager of the mill.

At a special meeting of the directors of the company, Jack, much to his surprise, was offered the post with an expression of confidence in his ability to fill it.

Of course he accepted it, for he knew he was quite capable of running the mill as it ought to be run.

His wife and his friends, too, were proud of his success, for had not he in a few years risen from Factory Boy to Manager?

Next week's issue will contain "FROM DARK TO DAWN; OR, A POOR BOY'S CHANCE."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

According to a suburban resident of New York City, red glass or red-dipped incandescent lamps do not attract mosquitoes in the way that the ordinary white light does. By installing low candlepower red lamps on porches where only general illumination is necessary, it is said that persons may enjoy comparative immunity from mosquitoes, just as if no lamps were used.

Two buck elks in the city herd in Glen Miller Park, Richmond, Ind., fought a duel, and before the employees could separate them, Teddy, head of the herd, had gored to death his son, a two-year-old buck. Teddy is one of the finest specimens of elk in the country, and is ten years old. It is the first time in the history of the herd that a buck has offered to harm its offspring.

Since the new law of April of this year, authorizing military marriages by proxy, came into force in France, over 700 such marriages have been performed. The law provided that two months must elapse between the application for authorization and the performance of the ceremony. One result of this delay is that in several cases the bridegroom has been killed on the battlefield by the time the proxy marriage took place.

A man in ragged clothes, with several weeks' growth of beard, and apparently demented, has been captured near Ogden, Kan., and is believed to be the "wild man" who has been sending women and children into hysterics. He was captured by using a lariat, and is now in the County Jail. From his ravings it appears that he is Finley Botson and has some relative by the name of Mrs. Brown in Argentine, Kan. He has a tattoo mark, "F. G. B.," on his right arm.

Mrs. Fred Smith, of Punxsutawney, Pa., formerly Miss Mary Hadden, has fallen heir to a fortune estimated at \$2,400,000. It was bequeathed her, together with his home, by Harry Riams, of Buffalo, who died April 26, 1914. Riams and Mrs. Smith, then Miss Hadden, were engaged to be married. The wedding was set for May 30, 1914, but Riams was then dying. His will, which has just been made public, leaves the bulk of his estate to his former sweetheart, but she cannot get possession until she is twenty-three, three years from now.

The great mass of the Indian workers in the United States are engaged in a comparatively small number of occupations. The latest official figures show that 85.4 per cent. of the total number of gainfully employed Indians are in seven occupation groups—Agricultural laborers, 35.5 per cent.; farmers and stock raisers, 29.2 per cent.; lumbermen, raftsmen and woodchoppers, 2.4 per cent.; laborers in manufacturing and transportation, 6.3 per cent.; basketmakers and weavers, 7.1 per cent.; laundrers and laundresses, 1.9 per cent., and servants and waiters, 2.6 per cent.

Epicures in the United States consume more Spanish olives than do the cultivated palates of all the other countries combined. The latest figures obtainable show that the annual report of this delicacy from Spain is 9,281 metric tons, valued at \$1,252,938. Of this, 5,183 metric tons, valued at \$699,641, came directly to New York and other American ports. Argentina was second, with only 1,240 metric tons. In the better and larger variety the United States leads with a consumption of more than three-fifths of the product.

Secretary of the Navy Daniels has announced that he will recommend to Congress an increase of nearly 300 cadets at the Naval Academy. He said that the proposal would follow logically on his recommendation for an increase in the size of the navy's enlisted personnel. Owing to the fact, the Secretary said, that not more than seventy per cent. of the applicants for admission to the academy who receive appointments ever qualify at the entrance examinations, the academy had never the total number of students which its facilities warrant. The maximum capacity of the academy was something over 1,200, but at present there are only 970 enrolled.

The electric searchlight is now considered as essential to an army as to a battleship, says the American Boy. All the armies of Europe have portable searchlights, the French having brought them to an especially high degree of perfection. The field searchlight is usually carried on one motor truck and the generator on another, a quick connection being made by means of wires. The searchlight may be placed in a most exposed spot, and both operator and generator kept in a sheltered position. The light may be automatically controlled from a distance, and thus, though the enemy center their fire on the light, the operator is not endangered. These field searchlights are fitted with 38-inch reflectors, and throw a beam of 7,000 candle-power. These searchlights will illuminate objects at distances of a mile and over.

After a most successful summer the codfishing fleet is returning to Puget Sound, Wash., fully laden with fine, large fish. The schooner Wawona, the first to reach Anacortes, made the record catch for the season, 258,323 cod. They weighed before being salted approximately 550 tons. The cruise of the entire fleet of about eighty schooners has been so successful that many were forced to leave for home two weeks earlier than usual because of being well laden. The trip to the cod banks off the Aleutian Islands began the latter part of April and the Wawona was fishing on May 8. Of the record catch, First Mate Sam Ostman was the high lander, having dragged in 16,129 codfish; Second Mate Chris Norwick was next, with 12,992. Because of the war the prepared cod will bring very high prices. It is estimated that the catch for 1915 will be the largest ever made on the Pacific coast. Between 2,000 and 3,000 men are fishing for cod this season.

THE NINE WONDERS

— OR —

THE ROUGH RIDERS OF THE DIAMOND FIELDS

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XXIII (continued)

There were scores of sporting men who were anxious to see and talk with him, but as they were denied permission to do so, the report spread throughout the city that his leg was in such a state that he would be unable to pitch for the team the next day.

Some of the sporting men inquired of the doctor about it, and he told them that he had a very bad leg, and if he played it would be against his professional advice. One man asked the doctor if he did undertake to pitch would he be able to finish the game?

"I doubt it," said the doctor.

That man immediately went out and put up all the money he could raise, which was several thousand dollars, to back the home team.

The next morning, as Tom failed to appear during the forenoon, the impression that he would not be able to play at all went out, and those who were disposed to back the Rough Riders with their money would not do so unless great odds were given.

Odds of three to one were freely offered, and Parry Parton, through a well-known citizen of Louisville, put up various sums to be staked at those odds to the amount of twenty thousand dollars.

They were promptly covered by the sporting men.

Then Parton went among the boys, and induced them to put up what they had, which they promptly did, turning their money over to him for that purpose.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

As he left the hotel to go to the carriages which was to convey the nine to the baseball grounds, Tom limped painfully, leaning on the arm of Parry Parton, and using a cane in his right hand.

"That boy ought to be prohibited from playing," remarked a bystander, "for it will be the last game he will take part in during the season."

When they reached the ball grounds they found the enclosure packed with a dense mass of humanity.

As Tom appeared, limping with his cane, expressions of sympathy were heard on all sides, while many loudly disapproved of his playing at all.

When the Nine Wonders went to the bat Jimmie Elliot

was the first to take up the willow, and a strike was called on him at the first delivery. The catcher caught the ball and returned it to the pitcher. But the second ball he smashed to right field and dashed to first base, where he came within an inch of being put out.

"You're pretty quick," he remarked to the first baseman, "but I was just a little bit ahead of you."

"Oh, we have to be quick with you fellows," returned the other, good-naturedly.

Harry Moore took up the bat and knocked the sphere to left field, where it was caught by the third baseman's making a high leap for it.

Martin knocked out a hot one to center field that sent Jimmie to second, while he himself rested at first. Jack Tilman sent him to third with a hot one to right field, moving Martin up to second.

Eddie McCoy took up the willow and had two strikes called on him. He seemed quite surprised at his missing the ball, but the third one he smashed to right field, where the fielder reached for it, but it bounded away from him.

Jimmie crossed the home plate, whilst Martin dashed for third, and took a desperate chance to get home. Not one baserunner in a thousand would have taken such a chance, and the home team were astonished at it.

He was put to sleep with his right hand within six inches of the plate.

"By George!" exclaimed the catcher, "with just a tenth of a second more time he would have been safe, and not one in a thousand could have gotten any nearer than twenty feet of the plate."

"Two out!" called the umpire.

Dick Crenshaw next took up the willow, smashed a ball to center field, where it was caught with but little trouble.

"Out!" called the umpire, and the nine retired to the field.

When Tom was assisted to the box by Parry Parton, the vast crowd was astonished, and many protested against his playing. Expressions of sympathy were heard from the women on the grandstand, many of whom said it was a shame.

Tom balanced himself as well as he could, and sent a ball whizzing and twisting through the air, which the batsman struck at and missed.

"One strike!" called the umpire.

The catcher pitched the ball back to him with a very gentle force, and he reached out and caught it.

In another moment he sent it again at the batsman in a way that made it look as if it were actually fluttering as it

went, and again it was missed, but the catcher failed to get it.

"Two strikes!" called the umpire.

The next delivery was but a repetition of the other two. The batsman struck but missed, and the catcher caught it.

"Three strikes!" called the umpire.

The batsman dropped the willow and retired, and the great crowd roared its appreciation of the lame pitcher's skill. Cries of "Good boy, good boy!" were heard all around the field.

The next man at the bat had two strikes called on him, and it began to look as though he would go the way of the others, but he smashed a ball to right field, got to first and started for second.

When he had gone about ten or fifteen feet his heart failed him, and he wheeled to return to first. The crowd laughed heartily, and some one in the crowd sung out:

"He is as green as he looks!"

The next man at the bat sent him to second on a bunt, but was himself put to sleep at first.

"Two out," called the umpire.

The next man at the bat smashed a high ball to right field, and was caught out, retiring the nine.

The Nine Wonders returned to the bat, where Patten took up the willow, and after vainly trying to hit the ball, got to first on balls.

Teddy Robinson sent him to second. Then Tom went limping to the bat, and the vast crowd wondered if he really would attempt to run the bases.

To their surprise he deliberately had three strikes called on him, after which he dropped the bat and retired to the bench.

"One out," called the umpire.

Jimmie Elliot picked up the bat which Tom had dropped and smashed a two-bagger to center field. Patten dashed for third, and started towards the home plate, when Teddy yelled at him to go back.

He wheeled and reached it on a slide.

Harry Moore smashed a high ball, and was caught out, but Zeb Martin sent it whizzing to right field, and Patten dashed across the home plate, whilst Teddy fell at third.

The nine retired to the field with one more run to their credit.

Tom was again assisted to the box, where he quickly pitched out two of the home team. But the third man smashed out a three-bagger amid a tremendous roar from the crowd, and the next man brought him home on a ball to right field, but was himself put to sleep in attempting to reach second. Thus ended the inning, with one run for each nine.

The score remained at that figure through the third, fourth and fifth. In the sixth inning both nines made one run, and in the seventh the score was evened up, making it 3 to 3. In the eighth each nine scored a goose-egg, but in the ninth the Nine Wonders made one run on a couple of two-baggers, Jimmie Elliot getting home by a slide that knocked the breath out of him for several minutes.

The home team went to the bat with the score standing 4 to 3 against them. By this time Tom was so lame that he had to stand almost entirely on his left foot.

He pitched out the first man; the second was caught; the third reached second on a two-bagger to right field.

The fourth smashed out a high ball to left field and was caught out, thus ending the game in favor of the Nine Wonders.

Parry Parton actually won a fortune on that single game, and that night at the hotel he made each member of the nine a present of one thousand dollars out of his winnings.

As the doctor had predicted, the strain on Tom's leg increased the inflammation of his wound to such a degree that the next day he couldn't stand on it. Parton wired to the manager of the next game, which was to be played at Buffalo, asking for a delay of ten days, which would give the boys a rest of two weeks.

The postponement was made, and the boys returned to their homes at Homesdale to spend the time with friends and relatives.

Of course, Tom had to lie in bed and avoid all straining of the muscles of his leg in order to give it a chance to heal in time to take part in the next game. He spent the time, however, in answering the letters of the beautiful girl mascot back in St. Louis. They exchanged letters almost daily, and the things that she wrote him did more to heal his wound than the skill of his physician.

He kept their contents to himself, for he was not given to sharing his secrets with others.

Not one of the team suspected their secrets, but they wondered why she did not continue to act as mascot for them in the four weeks after she left them.

Every game that was played during the season was won by the Nine Wonders through the splendid batting and baserunning of the entire team, and the marvelous pitching of Tom Knatt.

So great was the curiosity of the public to see the playing of those boys who had come out of the woods that enormous crowds attended every game, swelling the gate receipts up into the thousands.

The young Rough Riders of the Diamond Field pledged themselves to stand together for the next season, and that Parry Parton and no one else should be their manager.

It is thus we leave them resting upon their laurels, and in the enjoyment of the comforts so well earned by their pluck, skill and energy.

THE END.

OUT NEXT WEEK

A STORY OF THE MINES

—ENTITLED—

Young Fresh from 'Frisco

—OR—

THE BOY WHO BOSSED THE MINE

By Gaston Garne

THIS STORY WILL INTEREST YOU

OPENING CHAPTERS

NEXT WEEK

ITEMS OF INTEREST

BIGGEST TURBINE IN WORLD.

The largest single-unit turbine in existence is at the Waterside Station of the New York Edison Company. It has a capacity of 40,000 horsepower, is 57 feet long, 20 feet across and 14 feet high. Its total weight is 975,000 pounds. It is known as a 30,000 K. W. ten-stage high-pressure Curtis turbine. It operates at 1,500 revolutions a minute, but is almost soundless.

POSTBALL, THE NEWEST IN GAMES.

A new game, known as postball, is finding favor among the Y. M. C. A. men of Philadelphia. It closely resembles baseball, but instead of batting the ball each player on a team throws the ball at a post. If he misses it three times he is out, but if he hits the target the ball is fielded by the opposing side as it caroms off the post, and the runner tries to beat the throw to first base.

MAN TAKES HORSE'S PLACE.

William Sanford heard there was work in the Shelbyville canning factory. He hitched his horse to a spring wagon, took his wife in the seat beside him, whistled to his dog and started out. Twelve miles from Columbus, Ind., the horse fell dead. Sanford pulled the carcass to one side of the road, got into the shafts himself and, with his wife and dog walking along for encouragement, he pulled the wagon back to Columbus.

GLASS EYE FOR BABY.

When Mrs. E. F. Gaeckler, wife of a St. Joseph, Mo., merchant, noticed that one of the eyes of her three-months-old baby was irritated, she took the child to a physician. He found nothing wrong with the eye.

The child continued to cry and the mother took it to an oculist, who removed a concave glass that fitted snugly over the eyeball. A three-year-old sister had taken a glass from a toy cat's eye and placed it in the baby's eye because she thought it prettier.

\$7,000 IN COUNTERFEIT STAMPS.

The recent appearance of \$2 counterfeit internal revenue stamps on wine barrels in the Italian district on the lower West Side, New York, resulted in the arrest of five men and the confiscation of \$7,000 worth of stamps and several dies, after a police raid on a Sullivan street printing establishment.

On a tip that a large distribution of stamps would be made, detectives and secret service men stationed themselves near the printing shop door. A man who said he was Albert Callesi soon emerged with a bundle under his arm, and, looking up and down the street, rapidly walked away. One detective seized him. The rest ran indoors, where they found three others.

Calesi's bundle, the police say, contained a die and \$2,000 worth of stamps. Five thousand dollars' worth was found inside. Another prisoner, Dorio Nioletesi, was arrested at his saloon, charged with aiding the others.

EDIBLE SNAILS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Snail culture apparently has not yet made a beginning in this country, the few snails found on the market here being brought over from Europe alive in barrels and casks and sold by fish dealers in our large cities. Writing in the last Year Book of the Department of Agriculture, Mr. E. W. Rust suggests that the opportunities for snail-growing are really much better in the United States than in Europe. While in the Old World, the snail-grower generally has but a small piece of land on which the snails must be confined by a fence of special design, and where they must be regularly fed, in this country there is an abundance of waste land where these creatures might be successfully raised without attention, and as they do not wander far, they would not need to be confined. Mr. Rust states that the Mississippi Valley offers ideal conditions for snail culture. There is no reason why snails should not be used to some extent as a substitute for oysters, which they resemble in flavor. Their feeding habits do not, as in the case of oysters, involve the possible danger of infection with typhoid and other diseases.

THE LARGEST HERD.

In the territory of Mackenzie, Canada's largest wilderness region, which is larger than Alaska and twice the area of the State of Texas, is living the largest single herd of animals in the world to-day, writes Francis J. Dickie in *Our Dumb Animals*. They are the Barren Land caribou, and, according to experts, number some thirty million head—a number that makes them greater than were ever the buffalo of the plains. An old prospector tells the following story of the animals:

"In the spring of 1911 I was camped at Fort Norman on the Mackenzie River (this point is about 1,400 miles from a railway). The caribou were passing at the time. I was camped for two weeks, and all that time, night and day, they passed within a quarter of a mile of my tent. I have no idea how many there were, but they marched in loose order perhaps a quarter of a mile deep and were as far back as the eye could see.

Buffalo Jones, Ernest Thompson Seton and various other noted experts who have accurate and first-hand knowledge of the country, coupled with their knowledge of animals, estimate the herd to be in the neighborhood of 30,000,000 head.

That some day a railway will penetrate through this land to the shores of the Arctic now seems likely, in face of the rapid spread of railroad building. When this time comes, will these millions of caribou fare as their brother animals, the buffalo, did on the great plains to the southward? It appears altogether likely, as it seems wherever man goes the animals of the wild must perish. It would be rather hard on the patience of some Northern engineer to have to halt his train for a period of days or weeks while waiting the passing of some of this vast herd as it made its way leisurely across the tracks.

SIX WEEKS IN THE MOON

— OR —

A TRIP BEYOND THE ZENITH

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VI.

WONDERFUL ADVENTURES.

"Didn't you see it?" screamed Ned. "The terrible arm I mean which snatched him from sight!"

"Yes," returned the scientist, wildly, "but what manner of creature is it?"

"I don't know nor care. We must save him!"

Ned rushed up to the opening in the cliff. He hesitated but an instant, though all was darkness beyond.

For an instant after entering the cavity the youth stood in doubt. Then he saw a couple of baleful, glaring eyes just in front of him.

Also snake-like arms were whirling through the darkness. He could see nothing of Dick, but that did not matter to him.

The eyes he knew must belong to the creature which had Dick in its clutches. He raised his rifle and fired.

The report made a thunderous boom in the place. There was a fearful hissing and sputtering, and Ned saw that one of the baleful eyes had disappeared. The bullet had gone true to its mark.

Then before he could fire again some startling incidents transpired. Ned received a terrific blow on the temple and fell. At the same instant long, powerful arms encircled him.

His confused feeling was that he was in the grip of a boa-constrictor. The awful coils tightened about him.

He managed to scream:

"Heaven help me! I am dying!"

This wailing cry had reached the ears of the professor. The latter had now recovered and was also at the mouth of the cavity.

"Courage, Ned!" he shouted. "I am coming!"

But even as he spoke Ned felt the deadly coils about him relax. They slid from him and he was free. He staggered to his feet, fighting off a deadly sickness.

This was to run into the embrace of the professor, who cried:

"Is it you, Ned? Thank Heaven, you are alive!"

"Yes!" replied Ned weakly, "but Dick—look for Dick!"

"The creature which seized him—where is it?"

"I shot it in the eye! I believe it is dead!"

The professor drew from an inner pocket a small electric lamp connected with a pocket battery.

This he turned on and it illuminated the place. A startling sight was then revealed.

There was an immense heap of slimy flesh in one corner of the cave. Long, slimy arms were prone upon the floor. An immense cavernous mouth with open, horrid jaws was the most prominent object.

But what claimed Ned's and the professor's attention was the form of Dick Rodman lying under an arm of the cavern reptile.

His white, upturned face might have led them to believe that he was dead. But Ned quickly reached his side and, bending down over him, cried joyfully:

"He is alive! Thank Heaven he is alive!"

It required but a few moments for them to extricate Dick from his perilous position. Then the professor applied some restoratives.

In a few moments Dick came to his senses and it was a joyful moment for all. They made haste to get out of the place.

They took good care to avoid the giant crab outside as well. Having survived these thrilling perils, they continued their way along the shore of the crimson sea.

At every turn fresh wonders were developed. In fact, it is almost impossible to recapitulate them in detail.

But no incident occurred more thrilling than the one just given for some time.

Then Ned chanced to be the first to behold a strange spectacle.

He turned the corner of the cliff wall just in time to see what looked like an enormous boulder in the very verge of the crimson sea.

But as he gazed at it with idle interest, he was electrified to see that it was not a boulder but a living creature.

It moved, and a curious-looking head, more like that of a tortoise than anything else, appeared from under the mass, which quivered like jelly.

There were no apparent legs, but yet the curious creature moved away at a rolling gait. Its color was a curious tint of azure.

"What do you call that?" cried Ned. "I never saw the like of that before."

"Nor I!" cried Dick.

The professor studied the creature for a time. Then he said:

"It is my opinion that it is a member of the sloth family. Certainly it is a curious creature and unlike anything on earth."

"Is it a land creature?" asked Dick.

But before answer could be given by the professor, the animal answered for itself by sliding into the water and disappearing from sight.

Ned had already sent a rifle ball after it, but without effect.

But the curious sloth, if such it was, did not class with the next specimen which came to view.

This was a saurian akin to the alligator, which was more than fifty feet in length.

It was stretched at full length upon the shore, and did not seem disposed to stir at sight of our adventurers. It simply lay there, with a curious twinkle in its green eyes, which were as large as saucers.

They had seen so many wonderful things that the nerves of our adventurers had now become quite well steeled. They regarded the saurian wonderingly, yet not without complaisance.

"By Apollo!" quoth the professor, "he has jaws large enough for the whole of us."

"You're right," agreed Dick. "I think we had better not tempt fate by getting too near them."

Even as he spoke the saurian turned its head slightly to one side. A curious little animal like a kid had appeared on a spur of the cliff wall just above.

Fatal move for it. The saurian turned its head slowly, its jaws suddenly opened, and a long, livid tongue darted forth. It struck the animal, which fell helplessly into the yawning mouth.

One gulp and the saurian had completed its meal. Then it reared its elephantine head aloft, and slid into the sea with a bellow which nearly cracked the ear-drums of our friends.

"Cracky!" exclaimed Ned; "I'm glad he is gone. 'I don't believe I would care to navigate that sea.'"

"Right!" said Prof. Elias; "there are monsters in it large enough to sink the biggest ship."

"Do you suppose it is navigated?" asked Dick.

"It is not possible," replied the professor.

Then all stood still and gazed dumfounded at a scene which appeared to their gaze.

From a bay beyond the headland in front of them there shot forth a mighty object, which was almost beyond human power of description.

It was in shape not unlike a huge nautilus shell, and was surrounded with a high railing. There were no sign of sails or of steam power, yet the curious vessel forged along at a swift rate.

Upon it were grouped half a hundred of the most strange-looking beings ever revealed to human gaze.

They were types of humanity, and yet there was a likeness to the ape. But they were vastly larger in frame and stature than either.

They wore strange and fantastic costumes of some material resembling cloth.

It was Benton who finally recovered himself.

"On my word as a scholar!" he gasped, "the fact is proved beyond all manner of doubt that the moon has its inhabitants, both human and animal. A great question is settled."

But even as he spoke they were seen by the moon people. A sensation was created.

CHAPTER VII.

MAKING FRIENDS—GETTING AFLOAT—THE LUNAR SEA.

The curious-looking craft of the moon people instantly changed its course and bore down upon the spot where our adventurers stood so stupefied as to be unable to clearly think or act.

Straight toward the shore came the curious craft, and as it reached the surf Ned was the first to speak.

He gave a gurgling cry.

"They're coming ashore!" he gasped.

This was true. Without seeming fear of consequences the craft of the moon people came dashing up into the surf.

The next moment its prow glided up onto the yielding, spongy mass of sands, and lightly rested there. No damage was done whatever, as would have been the case on the earth.

Down over the craft's sides came the moon people.

Ned cried:

"Run for your lives! Run or we will be captured!"

But neither Dick nor the professor seemed inclined to move. Indeed, the scientist said:

"I don't think we need to fear them. They have not an unfriendly look. Let us trust them."

"So say I," cried Dick.

"We are taking chances," averred Ned.

But there was not time now for escape. They were surrounded by the moon people.

At close quarters the strange lunar natives appeared to be vastly different from their first aspect.

Their figures were massive and muscular, being fully seven and eight feet in height. Their skin was of a peculiar bluish hue.

Their features, it was true, were ape-like, and yet in expression were almost beautiful, being soft and kindly. Surely, the professor thought, these people must be of a friendly type.

They regarded the three strangers with evident wonderment. For a moment they stood regarding them inactive. Then one of them spoke to his companions.

What he said was of course unintelligible to our adventurers, but one thing impressed them wonderfully. This was the moon native's voice.

It was as soft and dulcet as an organ tone, and seemed to have unlimited power. Several expressions passed between these wonderful beings, then one of them addressed the earthly visitors.

The professor replied, but his voice was extremely shrill and harsh, and in strange contrast to theirs. It was certain that they were not familiar with the English language.

"They don't understand us, boys," said Prof. Elias, "nor can we understand them. We must endeavor to arrange some sort of sign talk."

"Good!" exclaimed Ned. "They seem inclined to be friendly."

"Oh, yes! We have nothing to fear from them."

By this time the interlocutor or spokesman of the company of moon natives bethought himself to make signs. Prof. Elias at once answered.

(To be continued)

NEWS OF THE DAY

Tooth-pulling is a very simple and painless process in China. The dentist rubs a secret powder on the gum over the affected tooth, and, after about five minutes, the patient is told to sneeze. The tooth then falls out. Many attempts have been made by foreign dentists to ascertain the nature of this powder, but no one has ever succeeded in doing so.

County Prison Superintendent Hally, of Seattle, Wash., has put an official ban on the kissing of women prisoners by visitors. Some months ago he gave notice that no more kissing would be allowed in the visitors' lobby of the men's section, following the discovery that "dope" in various forms was being transferred to prisoners by the lip-to-lip route. A similar discovery, he says, was made in the women's ward.

A 300-pound brown bear was killed by Albert Buck and Henry Bever while hunting their stock in the vicinity of Moores Flat, Nev. The footprints of the bear had been seen for weeks. The dogs got the scent and soon had the animal treed. Buck took one shot and brought the bear to earth. There have been several bears seen in the northern part of Nevada County, and they have been a menace to the stockmen.

The 400,000 Chinese in Indo-China constitute an important element. Nearly all are in business, and they control the trade in rice and fish products—the two leading industries of Indo-China—as well as the cinnamon trade of Annam and many other important branches of industry. The chief center of Chinese population in Indo-China is Cholon, the rice-milling suburb of Saigon and the most populous city of Indo-China.

The earth slides in the Panama Canal near Gold Hill will tie up the waterway for at least nine days, according to a dispatch received by the War Department from the Acting Governor of the Canal Zone. The slides have caused the most serious shoaling of the channel since last October. Movement has now stopped. Shoals are 800 feet long and at the worst point there is only seven feet of water, with an island five feet above water, 100 feet long and fifty feet wide, in the middle of the channel, the dispatch says.

Chief Many Tail Feathers, ninety-two years of age, and prominent in the Indian colony of the Great Northern railway's exhibit at the exposition, possesses a single tooth—gnarled and battered by many years' service. "The white brother may have his teeth replaced—why not the Indian, to whom the Great Father in Washington promises all things that are good?" pondered the aged chief. Many Tail Feathers conferred with Chief Bull Calf, and now that Many Tail Feathers has been measured up for a new set of pearlies his tribe has rechristened him "Grows New Teeth."

Comiskey was, perhaps, the greatest baseball field leader of his time. He had the knack of "getting the last ounce" from his men, and they respected him and fought for him as they would have fought for no other man under the sun. He was Anson's equal as a player, Selee's as a builder of teams, Mutrie's as a business man. In no single line was any pilot of the past, from Hicks Hayhurst to Frank Chance, his superior. Comiskey built up the St. Louis Browns into the champions of the American Association during 1885, 1886, 1887 and 1888, winning the world's championship from Anson's White Stockings in the second year. Individually, the Browns were not the brilliant stars that Anson's men were, but Comiskey's wonderful leadership and spirit brought victory when defeat was looming with ominous darkness above them.

A rifle-shooting contest held by the employees of the Department of the Interior, open to teams of three men each, was held at the Congress Heights, D. C., rifle range of the National Guard on Sept. 11. It was won by the team from the Secretary's office by a score of 347 points out of a possible 450. The ranges over which the firing was done were 300, 500 and 600 yards; ten shots for record at each range position prone. The Krag rifle, caliber .30, Model 1898, and service ammunition were used exclusively in this match. The conduct of the match was under the direction of Lieut. G. K. Shuler and five enlisted men of the U. S. Marine Corps. Under the able direction of Lieutenant Shuler the match was conducted in a manner wholly pleasing and satisfactory to the contestants, and at the conclusion thereof Lieutenant Shuler, on behalf of the Marine Corps, extended to the club and to its individual members an invitation to make use of the Winthrop rifle range at any time that they might find convenient.

It is one of the regulations of the British army that every soldier when walking out must carry in his hand a stick, in order to preserve a soldierly appearance and prevent anything like slouching in his gait. This rule applies to all ranks, and should any one seek to evade it he would find his progress barred by the sentry at the barracks gate or entrance to camp. Privates generally carry light canes or "swagger sticks," non-commissioned officers fairly stout sticks, and officers invariably go in for the more expensive kind. It is a question that has often been asked—Who first suggested the idea? But nobody seems to know. From the earliest times drill sergeants and drum-majors have carried sticks, and the fashion may have come from that fact. Soldiers, as a rule, buy their own sticks, but in one or two regiments a recruit is presented with one when he gets his uniform. If this gets lost, however, he has to buy the next and subsequent ones. There is a story told of a soldier one day who couldn't find his cane, and knowing he would be challenged if he didn't have something in his hand quietly picked up a poker, and passed through the gate all right with it in his fist.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Ten Minnie Reaubeaus already have made claim to the \$20,000 in gold coin and nuggets dug up at the home of Charles Reaubeau, a recluse, of Marshall, Mo., whose will left the treasure to Minnie Reaubeau, a niece. It was believed Reaubeau had considerable money, but no trace of it could be found until the recent flood washed away the old house and exposed a corner of an iron box buried under it.

When burglar alarms were turned in from the home of Floyd W. Miller, the jewelry store of Mrs. Roxana Kupschmidt and the cafe of Isadore L. Harry, of Lawrenceburg, Ind., the night policeman made a hurried run for the buildings. After a search it was found that Mohawk, a large monkey belonging to a show, had escaped from its cage and caused the alarms. The monkey was discovered in the cafe cellar, where it had broken several bottles of beer, and was so drunk it had to be attended by a doctor.

The Germans have lost twenty submarines since the beginning of the war, according to an editorial note in the Motor Ship and Motor Boat, while the British losses have been seven, including the E-7, the destruction of which was announced recently. When the war commenced, the paper declares, Germany had eleven sea-going submarines and sixteen of a smaller type; up to June 1 ten new boats had been added. The assertion is made that the Germans now have only fourteen sea-going underwater boats, two of which are in the Mediterranean.

When the Kaufman hat store at 387 Fulton street, Brooklyn, N. Y., was opened the other morning it was found that burglars had broken into the place during the night and stolen \$1,600 from the safe. The store is opposite the Borough Hall and on one of the busiest blocks in Brooklyn. Using false keys and a jimmy, the burglars effected an entrance to the store on the Adams street side of the building. The thieves moved the safe from a place near the front window to the rear of the shop, where they forced the door from its fastenings with a "can opener" contrivance. The burglars left behind five kid gloves, which, it is supposed, they wore while at work so that they might not leave any telltale fingerprints.

Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who was given up as having perished in the Arctic regions, has been found, and is now safe and well in Banks Land. The news was brought to Nome, Alaska, Sept. 16, by Capt. S. F. Cottle, of the power schooner Ruby. He carried Stefansson dispatches for the Canadian Government. He saw the explorer and his two companions, Storker Storkersen and Ole Anderson, on Herschel Island. They were preparing then to start on another expedition to the newly discovered land. The Stefansson report to the Canadian Government was telegraphed to Ottawa. It was brief and merely said that he was safe and that he was starting out again. There was no word of hardships endured. The dispatch showed some scientific results of his work and the hardy determination of the explorer to go ahead.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

De Safety—I once held thirteen trumps in whist and only took one trick. Softleigh—Nonsense! De Safety—No, fact; my partner led an ace, I trumped it, and they threw me out of the window.

"You naughty boys!" exclaimed the mother of one of a group of noisy juveniles. "What are you doing?" "Playing." "But I heard you calling names." "Yes'm; we're playing we're the Senate."

Toperly—Say, will you kindly pour that glass of whisky down my throat? Bartender—Getting lazy? Toperly—No; but I promised my wife this morning that I wouldn't lift a glass of whisky to my lips to-day.

Coroner—You say you told the servant to get out of the house the minute you discovered the fire, and she refused to go? Mrs. Burntout—Yes, sir; she said she must have a month's notice before she'd think of leaving.

Tramp—It is needless to ask you the question, madam; you know what I want. Lady—Yes, I know what you want badly; but I've only one bar of soap in the house, and the servant is using it. Come again some other time.

Sam—I doan' play pokah at Lige Johnson's house no moah. He doan play no square game. Bill—Yo' done cotch him cheatin'? Sam—Not azactly; but what right hab he got to nail er hoss-shoe on de doah de night befo' de game?

"As people advance in life," said Mr. Hiland to his wife, "they come to disbelieve the old sayings that have passed into proverbs." "Is that so?" queried the lady. "It is. For example, you never hear an old person quoting 'The good die young.'"

A colored witness in a Southern court recently stated that he was unable to testify as to a certain occurrence because he had a "domestic trouble" about that time. "What was that domestic trouble?" asked the examining attorney. "Well, to tell the truth, boss," said the witness, "I was in the penitentiary for stealing a cow."

A MADMAN'S FREAK.

By Kit Clyde

Some years ago, while going down Broadway, my attention was attracted by a crowd as I drew near, which, I observed, were watching a man engaged in repairing a steeple.

He was high up in the air, so high as to appear of the size of a small child.

"I tell you," remarked a person within my hearing, "it takes a man with a steady head for such work."

"And strong nerves," I mentally added.

Although I had business on hand, I could not resist the fascination of watching him for a few minutes.

Presently I saw him turn and look down on the crowd, at whom he waved his hand.

Then I saw his body begin to waver, and my blood began to freeze.

He stood upright, way up there, and folded his arms.

The crowd cheered his pluck, but as for me—my heart stood still!

I did not fear his accidentally falling.

Ah! no; it was something far different which I feared, and which only I in all that crowd was capable, perhaps, of understanding.

With me was a young man friend. To him I slowly said:

"Come, let us get away from here, unless you wish to witness a horrible scene."

"Why, what is the matter?" he demanded in surprise.

I pointed up at the workman.

"I don't understand yet," he said.

"He has lost his head, and unless he has a powerful will you will soon see him a mangled corpse on the pavement here."

"You can't mean it! Why, he looks as calm as a baby in its cradle."

So he did.

But I could understand some things which he could not.

Various movements the unknown made were pregnant with meaning to me.

Just as well as if I had stood in his place did I know what was passing in the poor fellow's brain.

Perfectly did I understand the struggle taking place in the man's mind.

"Come!"

My companion turned. If I wished it, he would accompany me; but he had no such fears as oppressed me.

We turned to go.

A low, hoarse murmur caused us to look back.

Not a man in that crowd whose face was not blanched with horror, and many were closing their eyes or covering them with their hands.

I knew what had caused it.

There stood the unknown, just swinging his arms ere taking the fatal jump.

"Stop! Halt!" I shrieked.

The sound of my voice reached him; I could see him half pause—but it had come too late; already he had overbalanced himself.

The mania was on him again like a hungry wolf.

I saw him gather his muscles quickly and then shoot himself out into the air.

Thud!

For several minutes none had the courage to approach the spot.

Bruised—mangled—but not yet dead, though dying.

He opened his eyes when they touched him.

"Why did you jump?" they asked.

"I don't know—I tried not to—I couldn't help it."

A spasm of pain convulsed his face, he sighed heavily, and was dead.

"Come, Harry," I said, in a hoarse tone. "Let us get away from here as soon as possible."

Harry Burns assented.

"I wish I had taken your advice in the first instance," he said, with a shudder. "That sight has unnerved me."

"It was enough to unnerve anybody," I said. "Let us strive to forget it."

But this was not easily done, and that sight was impressed firmly in both our minds for a long time afterward.

* * * * *

"Well, doc, I have obtained an invitation for both of us," said Harry Burns one day, nearly six months later.

I had long had a curiosity concerning the sensation of going up in a balloon.

A cousin of Harry's had just built one, and the trial was shortly to take place.

Harry had come to inform me that he had obtained places for us both on her inaugural ascent.

"Now, doc, I'll have an opportunity of testing that feeling which you say comes over people when far up above the earth," and Harry laughed lightly.

"You doubt it?"

"No, not after witnessing that poor fellow's fall," and he shuddered as he remembered the scene. "Still it seems singular that people should be so affected. No, I do not doubt the truth of what you said—I can almost imagine the feeling. Something similar came into my mind the other day as I stood on the bow of a ferryboat which was just entering her slip."

Again Harry laughed. But in his tone was a certain uneasiness which caused me to glance sharply at him.

"The ascension takes place in two days," he said. "You will be there, of course. Or shall I call for you?"

"Call for me," I answered. "And, Harry, take my advice—don't attempt to go up in the balloon."

He laughed again, a little nervously, I thought.

"Pshaw! Do you suppose I'm a nervous old woman? You, doc, of all persons, ought to know that our nerves are made steady only by subjecting them to our will. Well, I will call for you. Tra-la-la!" and away he went, quite merry-looking.

At the door he paused to give me a parting glance, and the expression of his eyes startled me.

I determined then to prevent his going up in the balloon if it was possible.

The horrible sight had preyed upon his mind, and it was with him now merely a question of which was stronger, the will or the nerves.

He called for me at the appointed time.

A great change was apparent in him; he was the same rollicking, bright, devil-may-care Harry of old.

"Are you going to make the ascent?" I inquired.

"Of course," with a light laugh.

I looked at him again; he seemed to be under thorough self-control.

He might resent any insinuation that he was unable to take care of himself; I could say nothing.

"However," I thought, "I will keep my eye on you."

Never shall I forget the peculiar sensation as the balloon was cut loose, and at once shot high in the air.

Up—up—up—as an arrow is sped from a bow.

Then we began to go slower, until finally our upward course was ended just as we reached the clouds.

These were immense masses of mist and vapor, of greater or less density, the latter quantity giving them darker or lighter shades of color.

The balloon began to drift along among the clouds, impelled by a gentle breeze.

The earth was but a broad, dark expanse below us.

I looked about me, became interested, forgot Harry, became engrossed in watching the clouds, which, with kaleidoscopic swiftness, assumed new and fantastic shapes.

Suddenly I was recalled by a cry of horror.

Turning swiftly, I was fairly frozen at sight of Harry Burns just at the point of flinging himself from the basket.

Finding himself, as he thought, under perfect control, he had ventured to look over the edge of the basket toward the earth, so far below.

Instantly that strange sensation, that desire to precipitate himself toward earth, entered his brain.

He was sensible enough to realize his danger, and tried to draw back; but the fascination, like the charm the snake exercises over the bird, was upon him, and he continued to gaze, while the desire momentarily grew stronger and stronger, until it became irresistible.

At that moment, he was as actually and truly a madman as any unfortunate who ever dwelt within the four walls of an asylum.

It was an awful moment.

I tried to speak.

But my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth.

I tried to spring to his side.

But I was rooted to the spot.

I raised my arm and signed to the person nearest Harry to clutch hold of him.

But his limbs were also fettered by chains stronger than those made of iron.

Harry Burns poised himself, gathered his muscles, and: "Harry!"

His wild eyes met mine, and then a frightened look flashed into them.

As he was going a gleam of consciousness as to what he was really doing had entered his mind.

Then a look of horror swept over his face—and then it disappeared from sight!

A sickening sensation crept over us all, and not a man among us could move hand or foot.

I wanted to watch his fall, but could not nerve myself, for an instant, to do so.

Then, mastering my emotions, I proposed to follow his downward course.

"See there!"

This exclamation caused me to pause and glance in the direction indicated.

"There is another balloon! And see, there is a man hanging to the drag rope!"

"It is a mirage!" I gasped, "and Harry is hanging to our drag rope."

"Heaven help him!" exclaimed his cousin.

Staggered, crushed for one instant, the next I was alive to the situation, was possessed of all my wits and faculties.

"The gas!" I exclaimed. "Let it out—lively! See, we are approaching a sheet of water; if we can only reach that before he drops, we may save him."

The valve was opened—the gas rushed out with a hissing sound.

We began to descend, and, entering a stronger breeze, were carried more swiftly toward the water.

I watched the mirage—he still clung to the rope. But the mirage, at last, was gone.

With bated breath I bent over the edge of the car, and prayed inwardly that this madman's freak might not result in the loss of a life.

He was holding on still, but might let go any moment.

Would we never reach the water?

"Let out more gas!" I cried.

The swiftness of our descent had prevented Harry's letting go of the rope, to which, however, he had hung mechanically, without any idea of saving himself. I saw that now the rope was slipping through his hands; he had hold of it but a foot or so above the grapnel.

"Let out the gas! We must descend more swiftly!"

Downward, yet downward, we went at a fearful rate.

On—on—the water was near at hand. Down—down until it was almost certain that we, too, would be dashed into the water.

My companions on that terrible voyage had by this time somewhat recovered their self-possession, and now peered over the edge of the basket.

"He is about to let go," exclaimed one, in a horrified tone.

But I drew a breath of relief, for we were gliding along just above the surface of the water. Harry let go when but a few feet intervened between him and the surface.

Splash!

The basket had already struck, and a minute later the big bag had entirely collapsed.

"Harry!"

He had appeared on the surface after having sunk.

He turned as I called his name, and an expression of joy, mingled with a puzzled look, appeared on his face.

"Swim this way!" I cried, and he did as I ordered.

A minute or two later we drew him into the basket, or car, as it is not infrequently called.

The balloon had been seen as it fell into the water, and small boats were soon coming towards us from the shore, to which they towed us.

It was fully an hour before Harry Burns fully recovered his reason.

Then, turning on me a face that was pale, and eyes that were startled, he said:

"I should have taken your advice. Only think of my peril. It was a madman's freak."

TIMELY TOPICS

Lands in the Republic of Costa Rica suitable for the cultivation of bananas and within reach of railroad transportation range in price from \$35 to \$40 United States currency per hectare (2.47 acres). All banana lands worth while—that is, adaptable and near transportation—have been filed on and title secured. The several owners are now holding them at the prices quoted.

Eighty acres of land cleared and cultivated without a horse setting foot on the place is the record made by W. C. Wyckoff, a former Bloomington, Ill., farmer, who located at Crivitz, in Marinette County, Wis., last year. His farm was entirely raw land in the spring of 1914. Wyckoff says this is the age of power. He has an eleven-ton tractor, and whether the task is clearing land, leveling, plowing, disking, harrowing or harvesting, the tractor furnishes the power. When he goes to town Wyckoff drives an auto.

Tests conducted in Great Britain have shown that the use of rubber tires on the huge wheels of steam tractors greatly increases the efficiency of the vehicles. Before the war, no one dreamed of putting rubber tires on the broad wheels of the tractors, but rubber is cheap in England and tires of that material were tried out. The results have been so surprisingly good that the majority of the big tractors, both in Great Britain and behind the battle lines in Flanders, have been rubber-tired. The tractors formerly had either steel or wooden plug tires.

Moab Turner, seventy-seven years old, of Newcastle, Ind., was buried in a coffin he had made thirty years ago when he suffered his first stroke of paralysis. It was built from a great walnut chest, which had been in his family for years. The coffin has been in the care of a local undertaker for the last ten years. Turner, who was eccentric and arranged his own funeral, lived in Tennessee when the Civil War broke out. He was conscripted by the South, and after six months' service succeeded in having himself taken prisoner so that he could join the Union army. He was captured at Cumberland Gap, exchanged, saw service daily in the Atlanta campaign and was again captured.

Japanese rubber factories are working at top speed at present endeavoring to capture the Far Eastern market before the British and German manufacturers can again become competitors. Heretofore, American manufacturers have been too busy in the home market to bother about establishing a market for their tires in Asia and Australia, and unless steps are taken along these lines in the immediate future, they will find the market pre-empted by the Japanese. Japan imported about 2,500,000 pounds of rubber in 1913 and 1914, while in the previous years only about 2,000,000 pounds were used annually. The capital invested in the industry is \$2,500,000 and the workingmen number about 4,000.

How little the bayonet is used by the Germans in this war is shown by the fact that of the first 1,000 soldiers treated in the American Red Cross Hospital at Paighton only six had been wounded by bayonets. About 59 per cent. of the shrapnel shell, grenade or gunshot wounds were found to be non-perforating. Not counting fractures, the wounds were located as follows: Head, 64; neck, 8; trunk, 122; upper extremity, 132; lower extremity, 241; central and peripheral nerve injuries, 11; circulatory, 1. Heart trouble and rheumatic fever were most frequently observed. The average time elapsing between the injury and the first field dressing of the wound was about six and a half hours. Thirty-five of the 1,000 wounded were unfit ever to return to duty, and those who did return were, on an average, about twenty-three days on sick leave. Only three of the thousand died.

Capt. Robert W. Mueller, former teller of the First National Bank of Milwaukee and commander of Troop A, a crack cavalry company of Milwaukee, Wis., and his wife have been murdered at their summer home fifteen miles from Princeton, Wis. Their bodies were found in the ruins of the house, which had been set on fire by the slayers. The motive for the murder of the couple, who were popular in Milwaukee social circles, is a mystery, though robbery is suggested by the fact that they were known to be wealthy. Not a trace of the slayers or a clew of any kind has been found. The Muellers were alone at their place without servants, and no one saw the fire until the house was destroyed. Neighbors found the ruins of the house and later took from the ashes the two charred bodies. The Mueller home was nearly fifteen miles from the nearest town, on the shore of Lake Puckaway. It is believed that the home was burned some time during the night.

The Indians living near the Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado are interested in the outcome of their predictions about the telephone line which the Government has just completed from Mancos, Colo., on the Denver and Rio Grande railroad, into the Mesa Verde National Park. They declare that the poles won't stand and that the wires won't talk. When asked why, they solemnly reply that the "little people" will permit no such uncanny things to come so near their ancient homes. Nor can they be persuaded to the contrary. The white men will see for themselves pretty soon. The Indians live in great awe of the prehistoric dwellings of the Mancos Valley, says the Railroad Red Book. They will not believe that it was Pueblo Indians, or any Indians in fact, who, so long ago that the oldest traditions describe them as they now are, carved these wonderful cities out of the cliffs. They believe that spirits built the cliff dwellings, and that spirits still inhabit them. They reverently call these spirits the "little people." For this reason it is difficult to induce Indians to approach the cliff dwellings. Whether or not the continued success of the Government telephone line will shake their superstitious faith remains to be seen.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

NOVEL FRUIT BARRELS.

A partitioned barrel has been invented by a fruit man in British Columbia, patents for which have been applied for in Canada and this country. It is similar to an ordinary barrel, according to a commerce report, but it is divided into two equal parts by partitions which are adjusted so that the barrel may be sawed in two without injuring the contents, practically making two half barrels. The advantages claimed for the new barrel are that it can be made of cheap sawed lumber, shipped in the "knock down" state and assembled easily at the packing-house; also that the fruit can be shipped without wrapping because of the firmness imparted by the central partitions. The fruit shipped in it is said to arrive in perfect condition.

THE CONSUMPTION OF SALT.

Salt consumed in the United States amounted to 9,998,520,560 pounds during 1914, an increase of 41,575,800 pounds over that consumed in 1913. That amount, announced at Washington recently by the Geological Survey, would mean a per capita consumption of almost 100 pounds for the year, says The Oakland Tribune. Sugar's per capita consumption during 1914 was 89.14 pounds.

Salt production in the United States was 9,736,911,160 pounds and imports were 261,609,320 pounds during 1914. That produced in this country was valued at \$10,271,358. Production was greater than in 1913, keeping pace with the increase in population.

There has been a steady downward trend in the cost of salt owing to the abundant sources of supply and also the great advance made in the last few decades in methods of manufacture, the Geological Survey's experts declare. The widespread distribution of salt has led to great multiplication of manufacturing plants, so that plant capacity has greatly outstripped demand. This has tended to lower prices and to increase greatly efficiency of operation in the plants that have survived the keen competition.

20,000 JEWS HAVE BECOME TURKISH SUBJECTS.

An insight into conditions in Palestine is given in the report just made by the Federation of American Zionists. It also tells of relief work, improvement in political conditions and progress of the Zionist work up to July. The report says:

"One of the most difficult problems confronting us during the war has been the attitude of the Turkish authorities toward the Jewish citizens of belligerent lands living in Palestine. Among these, some 30,000 Jews, who are Russian subjects, occupy the first place. The Turkish Government offered them exceedingly favorable conditions for Ottomanization. And as a result about 20,000 of them became Turkish subjects, 8,000 left Palestine and went, for the most part, to Egypt, where they are taken care of by a special Jewish committee acting for the Provisional Jewish Relief Committee. The remaining 2,000

Jews who were left in Palestine consist almost entirely of aged people in Jerusalem, who are maintained by the Chalukah. It seems that no difficulty will be put in their way.

"Our farms in Palestine have continued their work uninterruptedly. The crops have in all of them been satisfactory; enough to provide the great Jewish population in the cities, as well as in the colonies, with foodstuffs from the grain crops.

"The Palestine relief work has now been organized by practically all the Zionist organizations of the various countries. For all countries, except America, the work is under the direction of our Copenhagen bureau, and in America under the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs."

INCREASE IN SHIPPING SINCE OPENING OF CANAL.

Since the opening of the canal a year ago, the shipping in the port of Cristobal at the northern end of the waterway has increased so rapidly that already the two 1,000-foot steel and concrete piers, costing \$2,500,000 each, are no longer adequate to care for the vast amount of freight handled. A third pier is being built and plans for a fourth have been drawn up.

Frequently the congestion at the two piers is so great that ships have to wait their turn in order to get docking room. This is causing considerable delay to traffic, especially that which comes to the Isthmus to be reshipped to points along the coasts of Central and South America. These broken cargoes are frequently delayed from a month to six weeks.

It had been thought that Balboa, the southern terminus of the canal, would become the most important transshipping port of the canal termini. The 1,000-foot piers, extending into the inner harbor, besides two long shoreline piers were planned and are now in course of construction. Officials now, however, are of the opinion that this will be far more than Balboa will require for some years to come.

It was expected that the South American steamship lines would make that their terminal port and that probably some of the Atlantic connecting links would pass through the canal to deliver their cargoes at the Balboa docks. Also, it was thought that the cargo which did not come through the canal in this manner would be handled by the Panama railroad.

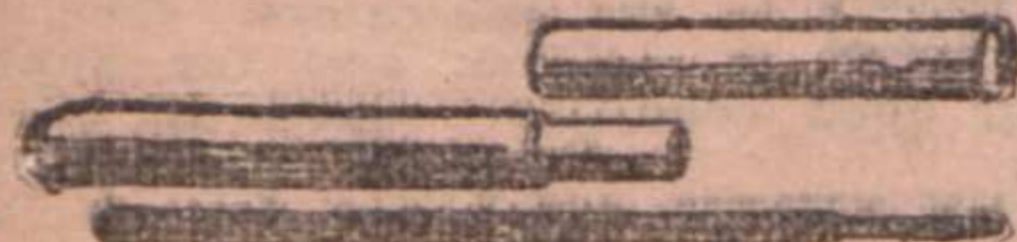
The South American steamship lines, however, suddenly decided to pass through the canal and pick up their cargoes at the Cristobal terminals because they learned they could use the canal, paying the tolls on a ballast basis one way, return with a full hold and do it cheaper than if they made Balboa their terminal. The high tides at the Balboa terminals also had much to do with their decision. Besides, freight rates on the Panama railroad are said to be very high.

THE BURNING CIGARETTE.

The greatest trick joke out. A perfect imitation of a smouldering cigarette with bright red fire. It fools the wisest. Send 10c. and we will mail it, **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

MARBLE VASE.

A clever and puzzling effect, easy to do; the apparatus can be minutely examined. Effect: A marble can be made to pass from the hand into the closed vase, which a moment before was shown empty. This is a beautiful enameled turned wood vase. Price, 20c. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**



GLASS PEN.—Patent glass pen, with nice dip, writes like any ordinary pen; each put up in wooden box. Price, 10c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

IMITATION GOLD TEETH.



Gold plated tooth, shape made so that it will fit any tooth. Price, 5c., postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

GOOD LUCK PUZZLE.



It consists of three horseshoes fastened together. Only a very clever person can take off the closed horseshoe from the two linked horseshoes. But it can be done in a moment when the secret is known. Price, by mail, 10c. each. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

SEE-SAW PUZZLE.



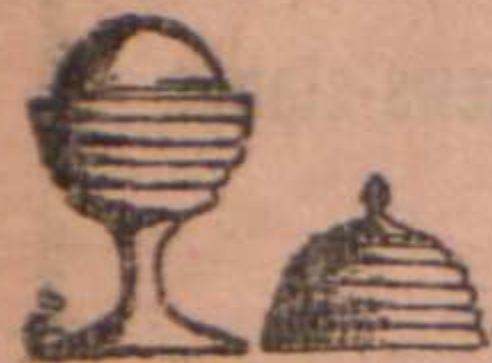
The most absorbing puzzle seen for years. The kind you sit up half the night to do. The puzzle is to get both balls, one in each pocket. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

NAME CARDS.



The newest and in picture postals. They are beautifully lithographed in a variety of colors and have various names, such as Harry, Edith, etc., printed on the reverse side. Just the thing to mail to your friends. Price 6 for 10 cents, by mail, postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

TRICK CUP.



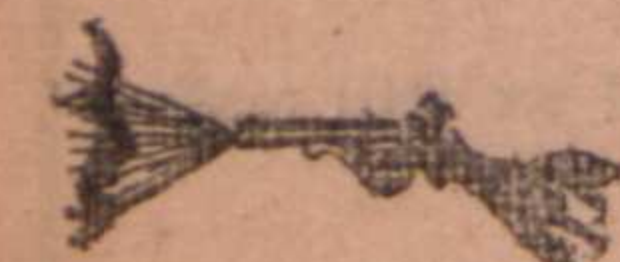
Made of natural white wood turned, with two compartments; a round, black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a stationary ball. By a little practice you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller. Price, 10c., postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

LINK THE LINK PUZZLE.



The sensation of the day. Pronounced by all, the most baffling and scientific novelty out. Thousands have worked at it for hours without mastering it, still it can be done in two seconds by giving the links the proper twist, but unless you know how, the harder you twist them the tighter they grow. Price, 6c.; 3 for 15c.; one dozen, 50c., by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 7c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

TRICK MATCHES.



Consist of a Swedish safety box, filled with matches, which will not light. Just the thing to cure the match borrowing habit. Price, 5c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

CRAWLING BUGS.



These giant beetles are beautifully enameled in natural, brilliant colors. There is a roller underneath, actuated by hidden springs. When the roller is wound up the bug crawls about in the most life-like manner. Try one on the maid if you want to enjoy yourself. Price, 12c. each, by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

THE PRINCESS OF YOGI CARD TRICK.



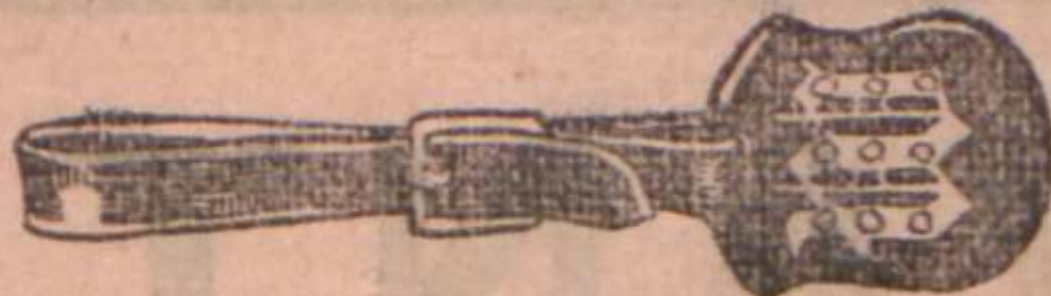
Four cards are held in the form of a fan and a spectator is requested to mentally select one of the four. The cards are now shuffled and one is openly taken away and placed in his pocket. The performer remarks that he has taken the card mentally selected by the spectator. The three cards are now displayed and the selected card is found to be missing. Reaching in his pocket the performer removes and exhibits the chosen card. Price, 15c. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

SURPRISE MOVING-PICTURE MACHINE.



It consists of a small nickle metal tube, 4 1/2 inches long, with a lens eye-view, which shows a pretty ballet girl or any other scene. Hand it to a friend who will be delighted with the first picture, tell him to turn the screw on the side of the instrument, to change the views, when a stream of water squirts in his face, much to his surprise. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, and one filling will suffice for four or five victims. Price, 30c. each by mail, postpaid; 4 for \$1.00. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

INITIAL WATCH FOB.



It has a neat enameled black strap, and small secure buckle, with a patent catch so that no watch can slip off. The handsome tortoise shell pendants are beautifully engraved with any initial you desire. The letter is fire gilt, cannot rub off, and is studded with nine Barrios diamonds. These fobs are the biggest value ever offered. Price, 25c. each, by mail, postpaid. **FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.**

SURPRISE KINEMATOGRAPH.



The greatest hit of the season! It consists of a small metal, nickle tube, with a lens eye view, which shows a pretty ballet girl in tights. Hand it to a friend, who will be delighted with the first picture; tell him to turn the screw in center of instrument to change the views, when a stream of water squirts into his face, much to his disgust. Anyone who has not seen this kinematograph in operation is sure to be caught every time. The instrument can be refilled with water in an instant, ready for the next customer. Price 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

THE DISAPPEARING CIGAR.



A new and startling trick. You ask a friend if he will have a cigar; if he says yes (which is usually the case), you take from your pocket or cigar case, an ordinary cigar, and hand it to him. As he reaches out for it, the cigar instantly disappears right before his eyes, much to his astonishment. You can apologize, saying, you are very sorry, but that it was the last cigar you had, and the chances are that he will invite you to smoke with him if you will let him into the secret. It is not done by sleight-of-hand, but the cigar actually disappears so suddenly that it is impossible for the eye to follow it, and where it has gone, no one can tell. A wonderful illusion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

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MINIATURE COMPASS CHARM.



A beautiful charm, to be worn on the watch chain. It consists of a true and perfect compass, to which is attached, by a pivot, a powerful magnifying glass. When not in use the magnifying glass fits closely inside the compass and is not seen. The compass is protected by a glass crystal, and is handsomely silver-nickel plated and burnished, presenting a very attractive appearance. Here you have a reliable compass, a powerful magnifying glass, and a handsome charm, all in one. It is a Parisian novelty, entirely new. Price, 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**



This puzzle is a wonder. It consists of two pieces of wood. A hole is bored through the upper end of both. A red string passes through the holes. Take a knife, insert it between the wooden blocks and cut upwards. You separate the pieces of wood, and the string is apparently cut in two. Close the blocks together, seize an end of the string, and you can pull the entire cord through the holes, absolutely—not cut. Very mystifying. Price, 12c. each, by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

SURPRISE PERFUME BOTTLE.



Those in the joke may freely smell the perfume in the bottle, but the uninitiated, on removing the cork will receive the contents in his hands. This is a simple and clever joke. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

THE MYSTIC RING.



A Brand-New Trick, Just Out.—Puzzling, Mystifying and Perplexing. A metal ring is handed around for examination, and is found to be solid, unbroken japanned iron. A cane, a pencil or a string is held tightly at each end by a spectator. The performer lightly taps the cane with the ring, and the ring suddenly is seen to be encircling the cane. How did the ring pass the spectator's two hands and get on the cane? The most mystifying trick ever invented. Others charge 75 cents for this trick; but our price, including instruction, is 12c., postpaid. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

MAGIC DIE BLOCK.



A wonderfully deceptive trick! A solid block, two inches square, is made to appear and disappear at pleasure. Borrowing a hat from one of the audience, you place the block on top, sliding a cardboard cover (which may be examined) over it. At the word of command you lift the cover, the block is gone, and the same instant it falls to the floor, through the hat, with a solid thud, or into one of the spectator's hands. You may vary this excellent trick by passing the block through a table and on to the floor beneath, or through the lid of a desk into the drawer, etc. This trick never fails to astonish the spectators, and can be repeated as often as desired. Price, 35c., postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.



A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim, while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 8c., 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 80c., sent by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

SMALL COLLAPSIBLE PENCILS

The name is a joke. It looks small enough while it is hanging on your watch-chain, and it is very handsome in design, prettily nickeled, and very compact. But just hand the end of it to your friend, and it begins to untelescopically until he imagines there is no end to it. Besides its ability to make fun, it is a good useful pencil, too. Price, 15c. each, by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**



KNITTER

Every boy who wants a whip-lash, pair of reins, or any other knitted article of similar kind should have a Knitter. Anybody can work it. The most beautiful designs can be made by using colored worsteds with this handy little object. It is handsomely lacquered, strongly made, and the wires are very durable. Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

TRAVELLING JOKE.

Yards upon yards of laughs. Don't miss it! Everyone falls for this one. It consists of a nice little bobbin around which is wound a spool of thread. You pin the bobbin under the lapel of your coat, and pull the end of the thread through your button hole, then watch your friends try to pick the piece of thread off your coat. Enough said! Get one! Price, 12c. each, by mail. Postage stamps taken same as money. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**



POCKET SAVINGS BANK.

A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and relocked, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed postpaid. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**



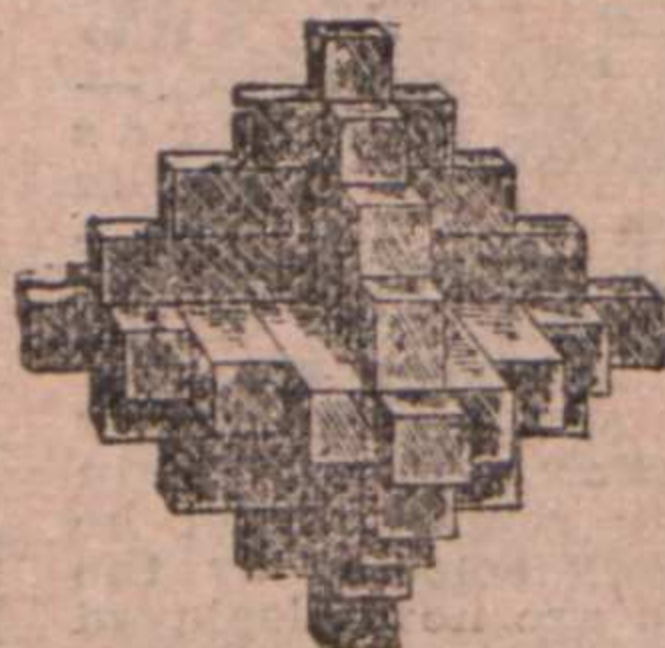
DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**



JUMPING CARD.—A pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**



GIANT SAW PUZZLE.

This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**



THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive. Price, 15c. **H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.**

THE MAGIC NAIL.



A common nail is given for examination, and then instantly shown pierced through the finger; and yet, when taken out, the finger is found to be perfectly uninjured, and the nail is again given to be examined. Nicely finished. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

JAPANESE TRICK KNIFE.



You can show the knife and instantly draw it across your finger, apparently cutting deep into the flesh. The red blood appears on the blade of the knife, giving a startling effect to the spectators. The knife is removed and the finger is found in good condition. Quite an effective illusion. Price 10c. each by mail. **FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.**

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A brand new novelty. More fun than a circus. You spin the post with your fingers, and the snake tangoes all around the top of the circular metal box, without falling off, although it is not fastened in any way. When the post stops spinning, the snake drops from the lid. What is the secret of its great attraction to the post? The marvel of the age. Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid. **C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.**

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These lilliputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

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